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Fanfare

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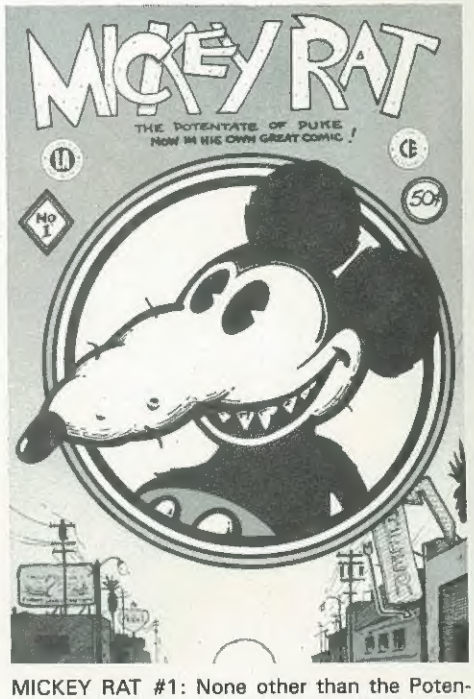

MICKEY RAT #1: None other than the Potentate of Puke himself, who debuted in his own comic back in 1972—this original edition published by the Los Angeles Comic Book Company. The Rat stars in a veritable myriad of fables written and drawn by C.C. Crill and Robert Armstrong. 32 pages. Only $1.00 postpaid.

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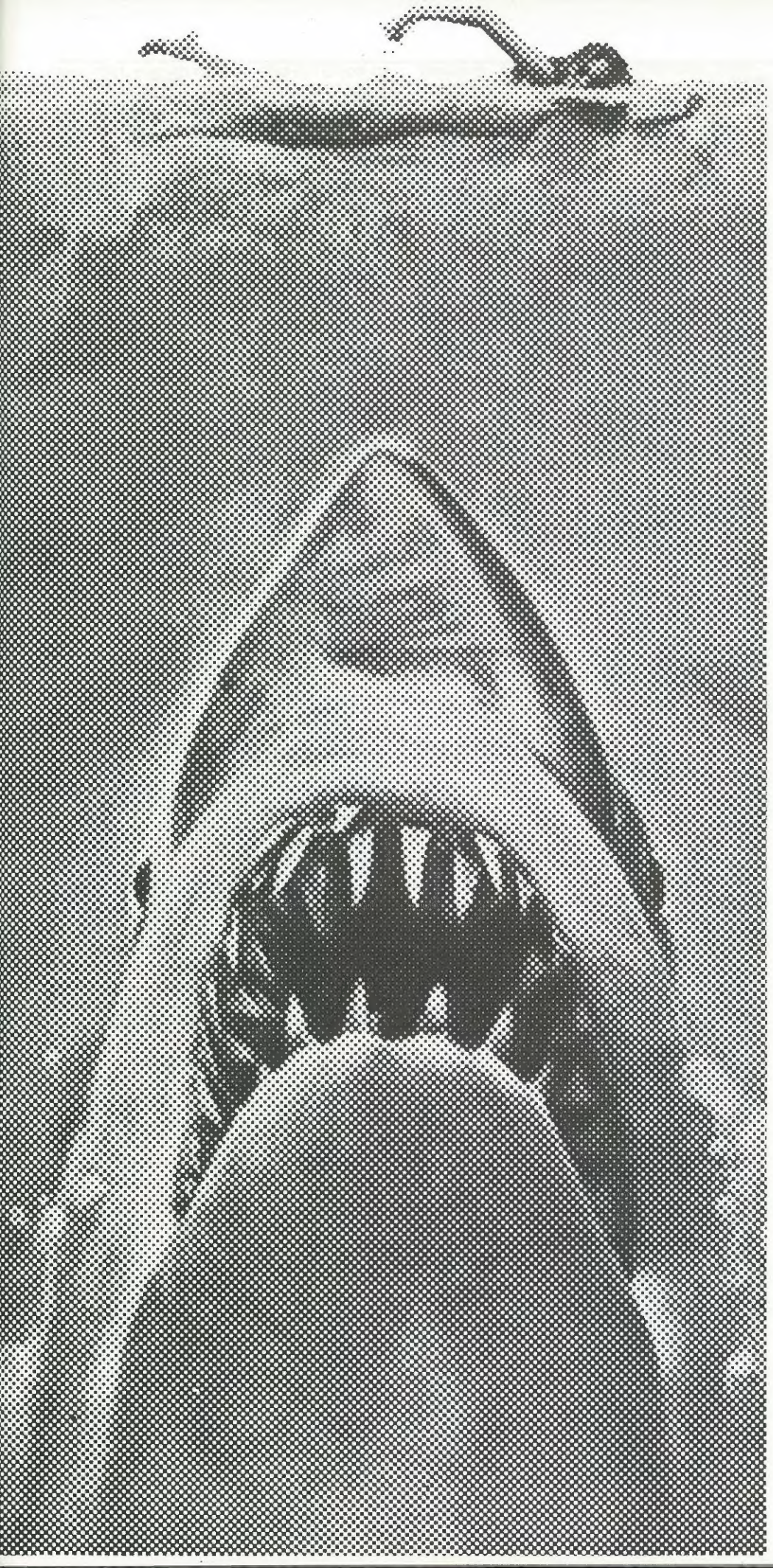

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COVERS: Jack Davis' illustration for the 1959 record album *Monster Rally,* which featured humorous horror songs by Alice Pearce and the late Hans Conried. For sharp-eyed readers who have noticed Jack's signature is reversed, seen over the back cover's mouse-atop-skull lower left, it's because we took the liberty of flopping the scene to get ensemble leader Drac on the front cover. The entire LP jacket in more or less unadulterated form can be seen in a black & white reduction on page 12. The back cover's pen & ink drawings are ten of fifteen Monster Fan Cards done by Davis as a bonus insert sheet for the 1964 RCA album *Dracula's Greatest Hits* (page 13). The five we didn't have room to include: Weirdo the Hot Rod Monster, Surf Monster, King Kong, The Zombie and Honda Monster.

THIS PAGE: Illustration from the well-known ad campaign used for Universal's 1975 blockbuster *Jaws.* Books that survey the making of this production and its sequel *Jaws II* are discussed, along with many others, by Dale Luciano in his article starting on page 25.

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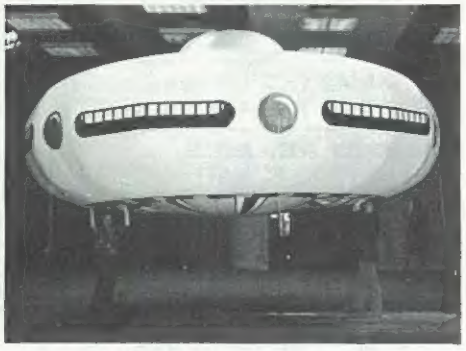
Short Subjects



SPECIAL EFFECT U.F.O. TAKES TO THE SKY

Elkhorn, Wisconsin / Remember the panic "War of the Worlds" created many years ago? The story may turn into reality as special effects wizard Dieter TJ Sturm announces his latest project — a real, flying U.F.O.

Sturm describes the special effect craft as being 24 feet in diameter, 10 feet in height, constructed from white translucent urethane coated nylon. The 60-lb. U.F.O. inflates with an air/helium mixture, with a lift of 300+ lbs. The craft is equipped with six strobe lights and has attachable mirror panel to reflect laser beams projected from units on the ground. "The one-of-a-kind prop will be used for trade shows, television, concerts, theme parks, and numerous promotional events", Sturm indicated.

During a past test-flight, over a year ago in Milwaukee, Sturm created havoc when the craft was flown above the March of Dimes Haunted House during Halloween. "The phones were ringing off the walls at the police station, sheriffs office, and the radio stations", stated Sturm, "of a reported U.F.O. sighting!" The sighting reportedly dead-stopped over a quarter-mile stretch of Interstate I-94 and was featured the next morning on the front page of the Sunday Milwaukee Journal.

Sturm, 26, who works as the Public Relations Director for TSR Hobbies, Inc., the world's largest adventure game manufacturer, and previously with Playboy Clubs International and Malrite Broadcasting Company, has recently formed his own consortium called Special Effects International. Sturm explains the philosophy of SEI as being an organization wherein talented and professional individuals, who enjoy the field of special effects, now will have the opportunity to design and create new forms of effects as a group. "Amazing things can happen when you gather such creative people, ideas, and concepts together" Sturm says.

Comprising the consortium group thus far is a laser technologist, an electronic engineer (former NASA), stunt helicopter/aircraft pilot, pyrotechnic designer and technician, special effects photographer (former *Playboy* Magazine), and audio engineer (international credits). Sturm hopes the group will expand within the year with additional talented people. □

ALL THE WORLD'S A STOOGE

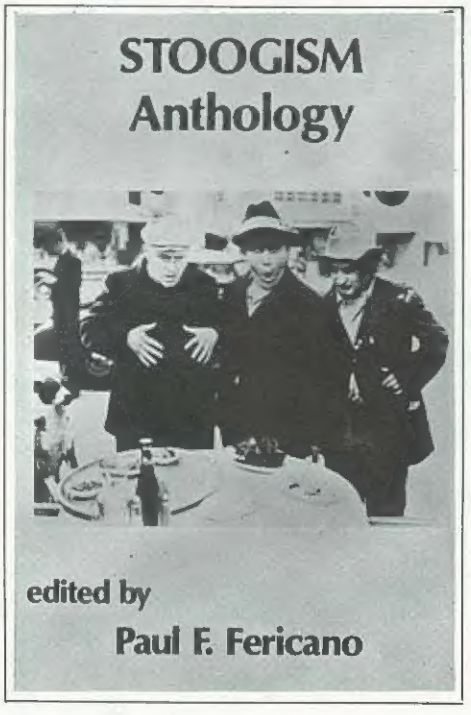
By Jonathan Pearl

The story goes that Dylan Thomas once defined the poetic aspects of motion pictures by recalling a scene of Laurel pushing Hardy down a flight of stairs, claiming "it was poetry in every sense."

No doubt pressing for equal time, a whole school of poetic thought has sprung up around The Three Stooges.

The movement began in 1977 with the publication of *Stoogism,* a poetry anthology dedicated to the slapstick trio. This volume includes works by four dozen poets, fleshed out by an essay and Stooges filmography excerpted from critic Leonard Maltin's *The Great Movie Shorts.*

While not all the poets chose to deal directly with the Stooges, several produced fresh, novel images never utilized by screenwriters. For instance, Charles Aitel's "Stooge Mantra" lampoons Hindu mythology by casting the Stooges as Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, terming them "a holy trinity of trivial profundity" and a "three-formed divinity of sacramental slapstick. Don Foster's "Moe's Blues" offers comic violence with bebop punctuations:



Moe buys a saxophone.
Listen to this he says.
He sounds like Charlie Parker.
Nyuk nyuk nyuk says Curly.
Moe hits him with his sax.
Now it looks like Dizzy's
Crazy Flugelhorn.

As a companion piece to *Stoogism,* publishers Paul and Kathy Fericano have also issued *The Condition of Poetry in The Modern World: A Stoogist Manifesto.* Besides devastatingly satirizing current American poetic practices, the Manifesto follows Stoogist tradition, flinging philosophic pies into the faces of academicians, politicians and other suitable targets.

Moe, Larry, Curly and all the subsequent replacement Stooges would be proud, if not a little befuddled.

Available for $4.95 (postpaid) from Poor Souls Press/Scaramouche Books, P.O. Box 236, Millbrae, California 94030.

LAST ROUNDUP FOR THE B WESTERN

By Sheila Benson

The Bounty Killer, made in 1964, may have been out of time synch (the Bs effectively died in 1952) but it was accomplished for $194,000 and is a true B by classic definition. It was made in nine days, at the usual union hours of 8:30 to 6:30, and all but one of those days were on rented Western streets and sets of Paramount's lot. There was one day on location, at the Iverson Ranch in Chatsworth, and on each day of shooting the crew logged between 89 and 92 setups.

At this breakneck pace, the only second takes were for a major fluff by an actor—or animal. Falling behind 10 to 15 minutes caused real panic. The cast was a true index of the B Western: Dan Duryea as its ambiguous hero; Rod Cameron, his early mentor; Richard Arlen as father of heroine Audrey Dalton; Buster Crabbe as the villain; Fuzzy Knight in his usual sidekick hitch; Johnny Mack Brown (in his first color film after more than 100 black and white Westerns) as the sheriff; Eddie Quillan as the piano player; long timers I. Stanford Jolley, Bob Steele and Edmund Cobb; and, in his first appearance since 1920, the epic silent Western star Broncho Billy Anderson.

The film's director, Spencer G. Bennett, whose last film this would prove to be, had begun with *The Perils of Pauline* serials in silent days and had directed Bs and serials

since 1921, everything from Wild Bill Elliott to Batman and Robin. (Bennett directed *Bounty Killer* back to back with *Requiem for a Gunfighter,* which was shot first but whose title became prophetic.)

Bounty Killer was made by Alex Gordon, an English-born, Western-struck producer whose tenacity and persuasiveness may have been the key to assembling this first-rate cast on his tiny budget. For many of them the charm was the idea of a reunion of all these B greats. Buster Crabbe, who was in New York when he was called, paid his own way to California, saying simply, "Just tell me when you want me there." For Johnny Mack Brown and Fuzzy Knight, it was a reunion after four years of films together at Universal. Richard Arlen refused to talk about money; he simply wanted to be part of this—as it turned out—last roundup of stars. And Broncho Billy Anderson had only three requests: a $200 donation to the Motion Picture Country Home, a shirt and a portable typewriter. He got those and credit in the titles which identified his role as: "Man in the Cantina..." Anderson's presence on the set, even though he was in a wheelchair and wearing a hearing aid, drew visitors just as the Norma Desmond sequence did in *Sunset Boulevard,* pulling Elvis Presley over from *Roustabout* to pay his respects. Broncho Billy was dead within the year.

Gordon snagged his screenwriter through persuasion, too. His wife Ruth had a life-long interest in the real West. As his shooting date neared, Gordon worried more and more that the script he had was impossible. He showed it to his wife, who agreed that it was unshootable and made a few sensible suggestions. She suddenly found the whole script thrust in her lap with the decision that she, who had never written a screenplay before, should do it. Aghast but, in the tradition of B heroines, plucky, she took four days off from her reservations job at Scandinavian Airlines and cranked out the script, working literally night and day. Her husband caught the pages as they came from the typewriter and had them in mimeo, she remembers, "before I could touch them up."

If Mrs. Gordon, who wrote as "R. Alexander," had one regret, it was the film's length. To play foreign markets where they wanted one-feature bills, the film had to be at least 90 minutes. The budget allowed no cuts to elaborate chases or riding tricks, the staple of the Bs. "So the characters just had to keep talking," she remembers wryly, "talking and talking and talking."

How did this final effort turn out? As an interesting, offbeat, low-key character Western. If you look you can spot action photographed against painted backdrops, and brush that isn't planted any too deeply in the sand of the set. Yet the story itself holds tenaciously.

History buff Gordon's interests paid off. Fuzzy Knight was given a scene describing a sail-powered Conestoga prairie schooner he saw once crossing the plains, the actual invention of a man called "Wind Wagon Thomas." In another sequence, in an example of true thrift, writer Gordon has a church sequence held in the town's saloon, something that actually happened in small Western towns that had yet to build a church. (First things first.) And, quite properly, heroine Dalton rides side-saddle at the Gordons' insistence

Gordon's script has interesting and unusual relationships. The girl is a soiled—well, perhaps just telltale gray—dove, yet she doesn't have to pay for her experience by dying. Rod Cameron's role as mentor, and particularly his last scene, is completely unexpected. Duryea, the idealistic, milk-drinking Easterner, is corrupted and eventually brought down by the rules of the West. And the tradition of the gunfighter's, or in this case the bounty hunter's, legacy carries the film's action well beyond its actual ending. (This film carried a double meaning since Duryea's nemesis was played by his own son, Peter.)

In many ways this farewell work obeyed B traditions. It had male stars primarily known for their work in Bs (Duryea, and, to a degree, Rod Cameron were the exceptions). It had the traditional hero-sidekick relationship. Young Audrey Dalton has a father, but no mother. Mothers are harder to come by than giraffes in the Bs. Fathers, for their part, die off precipitously so the little lady can inherit the claim, the ranch, the radio station, the cattle empire or the map to the mine. Any of which she can't quite handle by herself, sturdy, plucky, spunky or gumption-filled as she may be.

Bounty Killer has one of the most memorable songs you could hope for, an old English ballad from about the time of "Greensleeves"—and happily for the budget—in the public domain. Its haunting refrain is, "Go 'way, old man, and leave me alone." The film's composer Ronald Stein (who also doubled as a guard in one scene) built upon it, weaving it from its first appearance, sung by Dalton in the saloon, into the film's entire theme. If the song had been spotlighted in an A feature, it might still be remembered the way Angela Lansbury's poignant "Goodby, Little Yellow Bird" from *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is, to this day.

If the B was to have its swan song, it could hardly have had a more classically constructed work, nor a more historic group assembled for the services. (There would be a few more Westerns produced, notably by A.C. Lyles at Paramount, but these used major actors like Dana Andrews, in films produced by a major studio, not a minor, or, in the case of Gordon, an independent.) For many, *The Bounty Killer* marked the true end of an era. □

WHAT'S IN A GAME?

By LIZ McGUINNES, *Times Staff Writer*

Video games have been around since 1973, when a game called Pong appeared, but in recent months they definitely have "arrived." They're in pizza parlors, liquor stores, movie theaters, shopping center arcades—and even at Disneyland, home of the Starcade, which boasts some 190 game machines. But who would guess that this seemingly harmless form of entertainment would be causing such a controversial uproar among adults?

The youngsters have no problem explaining why they head straight for the games. They're challenging and fun. But adults find the situation more complex. Parents are worried. Their children are spending all their quarters on the machines, they protest. Sometimes the games eat up the children's lunch money or tempt students to skip school.

City officials also are concerned. Citizens complain about noisy groups of youths gathering around arcades, some indulging in drugs and alcohol, disrupting neighbors' sleep and scattering refuse on nearby yards. Businessmen growl about roaming kids scaring off customers. Video game dealers and distributors, sensing that the controversy over their product may start affecting profits, protest that the games may be getting a bum rap. If kids are getting out of hand, they suggest, that's most likely a problem of society as a whole. Video games, they insist, are harmless entertainment; in fact, they may help keep some kids from roaming the streets.

It's nothing new for communities to react to electronic games' appeal through legislation, said Joel Gilgoff, who runs a Van Nuys-based firm called G.A.M.E.S. with his wife, Shelle. He's seen pictures from the 1930s, showing New York Mayor Fiorello La Guardia breaking up confiscated pinball machines with a sledgehammer. But Gilgoff believes strict laws may be the wrong solution. When society has problems, people look around for a scapegoat, he said—and it's easy to pick on a machine. There's nothing evil about the games, he argued: "They're certainly not as violent as TV."

While Gilgoff sells game machines for

commercial use, he's had his best success selling them for use in the home. During the last seven years he has sold more than 5,000 machines—including pinball games, slot machines and others, along with video games—largely for home use. Currently sales of some games are tapering off because of economic conditions. But not so with video games—and that's at an average $2,500 to $3,000 for a commercial-quality Pac Man or Super Cobra to grace your living room. Those willing to pay the price include John Davidson, Charles Bronson, Cindy Williams and George Kennedy. But mostly he sells to non-celebrated Southern Californians who like to play the games, feel status in owning a machine, and enjoy the pizazz a machine adds to their home decor.

Video game sales didn't start taking off until 1978 when Space Invaders zapped onto the scene. The early games wore out their welcome rather quickly—usually in a couple of months, Gilgoff said. Children tired of a game as soon as they figured out how to beat it. But today's games are a different breed, he said. "They're more sophisticated, more challenging." □

BEHIND THE COUNTER AT A MASSAGE PARLOR

By T. Casey Brennan

When a freelance writer is down on his luck, he goes out and gets a job. So it wasn't just for a story that I found myself working behind the counter at the Happy Times Massage Parlor (not its real name). But I thought myself lucky, in that I knew it would eventually yield some stories to tell.

The Happy Times was three businesses at once — a massage parlor, an adult bookstore, and a coin-operated movie arcade. On occasion, I'd visited such places as a customer. But I was in for a few surprises, nonetheless. As with any business, the view from behind the counter is a little different than the view the customer gets. The massage parlor and adult bookstore business, I soon learned, was no exception.

Fortunately, I found myself on good terms with the manager, a very pretty young lady who also doubled, at times, as one of the girls who gave massages. She was no empty-headed dummy. Though young, feminine and street-wise, she had a capable head for management and business. She commanded the respect of all the employees, which included the other girls, and myself. Her duties included reprimanding employees who were late, ordering stock, and dealing with the local magazine distributors who were always trying to foist off magazines on us that we didn't want, or too many copies of those we did. She handled all that a lot better than I did, and everybody in the place looked up to her.

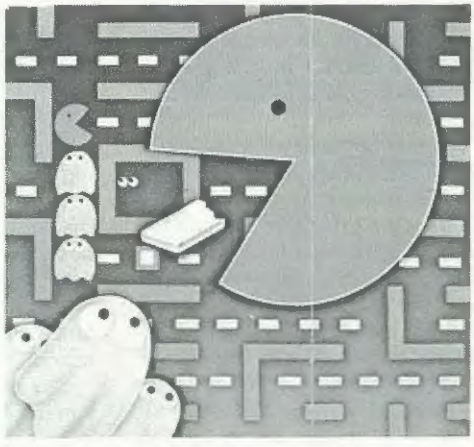
Most of the Happy times girls were quite pretty, though not all were nearly as bright as our illustrious manager. None of the girls used their real names with customers. They chose pseudonyms usually associated with famous, glamorous or fictitious women, such as Venus, Barbarella, Mandy or Vampira.

The Happy Times offered topless or nude massage with one or two girls, the latter service at a higher rate. The customers were as diverse as the girls, or perhaps a bit moreso. Some of them we were not always glad to see. Others spend money freely, treated the girls cordially, behaved themselves, and were always welcome.

PAC-MAN—AUTO-EROTIC PLAYTHING?

By ARTHUR ASA BERGER

The writer is professor of broadcast communication arts at San Francisco State. His book, "Media Analysis Techniques," has just been published by SAGE Books in Beverly Hills.



Adapted from one of the most popular video arcade games ever created, ATARI's PAC-MAN®, which differs slightly from the original, is sure to be a big hit in your home.

In this engaging game, you guide the PAC-MAN around a maze to gobble up dots for points, while dodging ghosts. In the four corners of the maze are special tablets. When PAC-MAN eats one, he changes color and can then eat the ghosts. But he has to hurry and catch the ghosts before he changes color again, or they'll eat him.

Once upon a time, in the not too-distant past, parents worried about their children (boys, that is) hanging around pool halls where, it was feared, they would be exposed to criminal elements and become corrupted. The great migration to the suburbs, where kids could grow up amidst grass—the old kind, that is—seemed to solve the pool-hall problem. Pool halls are city institutions and, in America, we identify urban areas with crime and corruption. So when we escaped to the suburbs, we thought we had escaped all that.

Little did we know. For with the development of video games we now have a more ubiquitous, more expensive

COMMENTARY

and, I think, more menacing problem on hand. Almost everywhere you go now—in small stores, in department stores, in coffee shops—there are video games and it is common now to see a bunch of kids pouring quarters into them as fast as they can.

Are these videogame emporia the moral (or should I say immoral equivalents of pool halls? In many respects I think they are. There are a number of things about them I find disturbing.

First, I think they are extremely narcissistic. Marshall McLuhan suggested, a number of years ago, that electronic media are extensions of our central nervous systems. In this respect, electronic games are, in effect, extensions of ourselves "outside of our bodies," and as we play these games we are, in effect, playing with ourselves.

This would explain the fascination people feel about the games and their addictive nature. Although on the face of it they are generally quite simple and terribly banal games, underneath they are much more complicated and work on us in strange ways. In fact one might argue that these games ultimately are a form of electronic auto-eroticism; that is, masturbation. This is, perhaps, an extreme statement, but the dynamics in videogames and masturbating are very similar.

Thus, one of the things that bother parents about these games (though not all parents may be aware of this) is the sexual aspect of videogame playing. And the kids aren't aware of this either; all they know is that they *love* to play these games.

But there's more to these games than just this. Different games tell us different things about ourselves and society, and this is where the Pac-Man fad or phenomenon comes in. I find Pac-Man very disturbing for it signals, I believe, an important change in the American psyche. It isn't the fad itself that bothers me as much as the dynamics of the game.

Let me explain what troubles me about Pac-Man by contrasting it with earlier video games. Many of them involved space exploration in which rocket ships raced through outer space fighting alien invaders and blasting them with ray guns and other weapons. (Of course, there were other kinds of video games as well, but Space Invaders was the archetypal video game before Pac-Man.)

There were two important aspects of these games: 1, They were highly phallic and 2, they were metaphors for freedom and an expansive, optimistic orientation. One coursed through outer space, one had powerful weapons, one fought heroic battles. And then Pac-Man entered the scene.

What is Pac-Man about? What does it signify?

Pac-Man takes place in a labyrinth, first of all. What it tells us, indirectly, is that we are trapped, that we do not have many possibilities, that our options are limited or bounded. The space frontier is over; we're no longer free but, instead, are prisoners of a closed system in which there are but two options. Eat or be eaten.

In this respect, Pac-Man is a highly regressive game. We have, developmentally speaking, abandoned the phallic stage and returned to a more infantile one, the oral stage. This is highly significant for it suggests that, collectively speaking, Your young people are afraid of adulthood and the burdens of responsibility and mature (inter-personal) sexuality.

Pac-Man suggests that we don't want freedom and that we don't feel we can be free. We get our kicks (or, should I say, consolations) in regressing to a basically infantile stage, where we are not expected to perform, where we are loved unconditionally and where we expect to be taken care of. Oral incorporation, gone mad, is the essence of Pac-Man and regression to more infantile states is its real message.

It is for these reasons that I find videogames troubling and Pac-Man especially disturbing. If I am right, Pac-Man signifies an important change taking place in the American psyche—a change that suggests a loss of heart and failure of nerve. This may be connected to our contemporary economic troubles. Pac-Man makes sense in a society in which there is joblessness and depression (economic as well as psychological).

My analysis flies in the face of those who suggest that videogames are training children for the new information society and that it is just a short move from playing videogames to programming computers. I wish I could believe that but it seems to me there's a big difference between playing simple-minded electronic games that are based, primarily, on quick reflexes and coordination and using your head to solve problems.

Whatever the case, Pac-Mania is now raging on. A home game has been developed and soon legions of kids (and adults) will be able to get their kicks from gobbling up dots as fast as they can in their own living rooms. As they do this they can wear Pac-Man T-shirts and listen to the Pac-Man song.

It has taken something like 4 billion years for us to evolve from a simple sea creature to Pac-Man. Sometimes I wonder what evolution is all about. □

The massage parlor customers ranged from the well mannered and well to do, to degenerated street types who were probably skipping meals and rent to pay the half-hour tab. Sometimes a traveling salesman or businessman would fall in love with one of the girls and return again and again, whenever he was passing through the city. Occasionally, a customer in a wheelchair would be brought in.

Everybody (employees and customers alike) got treated pretty well, except for the jerks who were abusive, dirty, or manic. Those guys were talked about by the girls, and plenty. One fellow I sold a half-hour session to was so nervous I don't think he ever did stop shaking. I doubt he'd ever seen a topless girl before, much less ever had a topless massage.

The process went like this: The customer came in, paid his fee, and I introduced him to the girls, who all sat together in a little room. One of the manager's jobs was to raise hell with the girls if there were Coke cans, candy wrappers, and overflowing ashtrays all over the place. A clerk who didn't introduce the girls respectfully never lasted long. The customer and the girl then went to a private room, and a timer was set for an hour or a half hour. If the paid-for time passed, and the girl and customer didn't return, it was my job to go see what had happened. It meant either that the girl was giving the customer some free time (a definite no-no), or that she'd been physically attacked or subdued. This didn't happen frequently, but it was always a possibility in that line of work. When it did occur, the police weren't any help, since the police in that particular city were against massage parlors, and didn't mind seeing them caused some trouble. (Not the case everywhere.)

The biggest jerks were the old men who put handfuls of quarters in the peep show machines with eight-minute movies. They'd smuggle bottles of booze back there and spill them, or sometimes they'd pee their pants, and leave a hell of a stink in the carpet. The second biggest jerks were the girls' boyfriends who picked them up after work, and were usually gay.

I was not the best clerk the Happy Times Massage Parlor ever had. I was nervous, jumpy, and overly protective of the girls. But in my favor, I was the only clerk they ever had who opened the place on time. It was supposed to open at 10:00 a.m., but the clerk with the key was always late, except when I had the morning shift. I was put on the morning shift permanently, shortly before I left. Just when the girls got used to coming in on time, instead of late, so they wouldn't have to stand around outside in the cold for an hour, I quit.

The morning after I left, I walked past the Happy Times. The morning shift girls didn't know I'd quit. It was 10:45, mid-winter, and the new morning clerk hadn't shown up yet.

They all started screaming, "Let us in!", "You're late!", "Open this door!"

"I quit yesterday," I said.

And they all screamed.

For all I know, they may still be standing there waiting. □

CEMETERY FOR SIGNS

By Steve Harvey

It's a graveyard of broken plastic and muted neon, visible from the Pasadena Freeway near Lincoln Heights: Thirty-eight Winchell's Donut House signs, lined up like triangular tombstones in one corner of the yard. Ten-foot-tall Kentucky Fried Chicken containers, some with sizable leaks, in an eight-bucket family plot. A Bob's Big Boy Burger was only 95 cents (40 cents ago).

Glimpsed from the freeway, Heath and Co.'s yard seems a promise of all manner of things: Naugle's Tacos, Chief's Auto Parts, California Donuts, a Pepperdine University marquee. But viewed up close, the yard takes on an eerie look since most of the signs were perched high in the sky when functioning and now appear abnormally large on the ground —as though plucked from the land of Lilliput where Gulliver did his shopping. "I guess they do catch the eye," says Jack Lloyd, the sales manager of Heath, which is one of the largest sign-makers in the world.

The graveyard contains maybe a thousand discards of various Heath clients. The life expectancy for a commercial sign is 20 to 30 years, Lloyd says. Some of the signs in the lot met premature ends because they wore out or became outmoded. R.I.P. Dunkin' Donuts, Poppin Fresh Pies, Super Seven Self-Serve Gas. The Winchell's markers—one of which is missing half of a plain donut on its face—came from outlets that were shut down in a recent reorganization. The Colonel's buckets wound up in Fast Food Heaven because the company has shed that symbol atop many of its stands in favor of a more subtle cupola. Too subtle? "A lot of the franchises aren't happy with the replacement of the bucket," Lloyd says. "But the trend these days is for signs to be more conservative, smaller, less flashy. After all, Cadillacs don't have 1957-style fins any more, either."

A 4½-foot-tall Pioneer Pete figure—the symbol of Pioneer Chicken—stands near the buckets. Time ran out for him, Lloyd says, because he "was on one of the company's early signs and they've gone through several changes." This obsolete Pete smiles bravely, though the chicken he once held in his outstretched hand is missing and only a few plaster crumbs remain. Other signs went to Heath's to die because the businesses they represented just plain dried up.

Poignant symbolism everywhere. The Pepperdine marquee is blank. A few of the signs —perhaps some of Winchell's— may be reborn atop new outlets, but most will be ground up and sold. Heath runs a sort of cradle-to-grave operation here inasmuch as its sign-making factory for the Western region is on the same property. Inside the building is another curious blend of signs in various stages of gestation: Sheraton Hotel Registration Valet Parking (near the entrance), a Van de Kamps logo (near the glass-blowing operation), lettering for Newberry's Glendale and Numero Uno Pizzeria (on the wall of a computer graphics section).

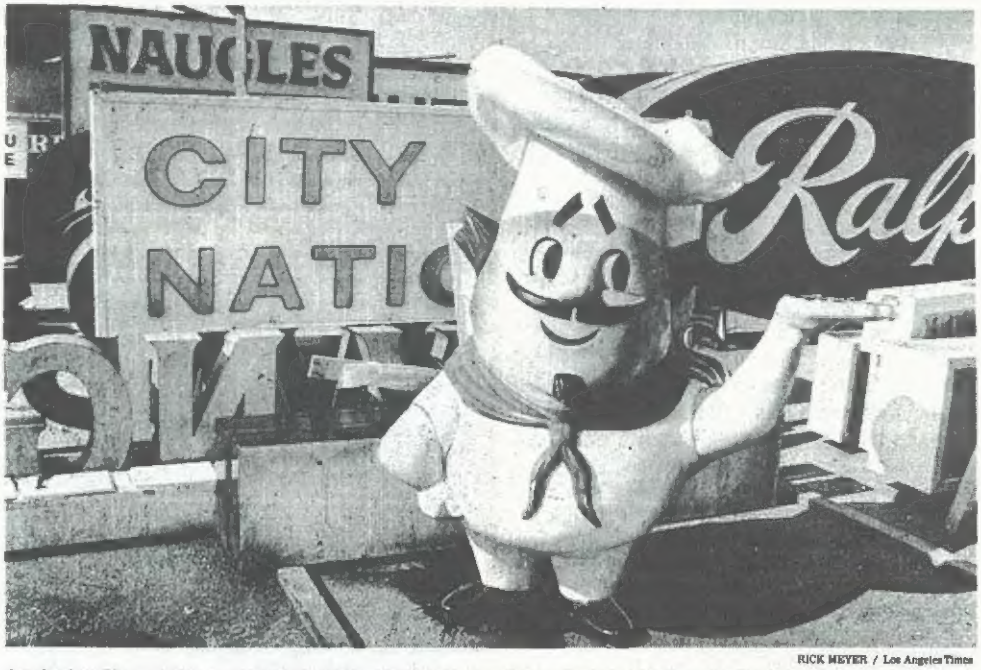
Signs that have yet to enter the commercial world. But some day they, too, will return to the graveyard at Heath's. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Plastic donuts are no exception.

COLLECTORS BLUES

By Don Brown

Why not reissue the best? Probably the easiest answer is that "The Best" doesn't sell as well as the rest. For proof, flick on your transistor for a few minutes and you'll hear what sells best. It's true in music, art, literature and even clothes and cars. Just look around.

In today's record business, the target sales goal is, and must be, according to their computers and accountants, a minimum sale of 100,000 copies. What fine (but relatively obscure) soundtrack, jazz LP or pop artist of the



RICK MEYER / Los Angeles Times

An obsolete Pioneer Pete, once symbol of Pioneer Chicken, stands in a graveyard of signs, the chicken missing from his hand.

past is going to cause that many ripples? We, as collectors, remember and enjoy them but Mr. and Mrs. General Public have forgotten them—and couldn't care less about taking a chance on re-hearing them.

The major record firms all have a staff of record producers whose job it is to provide new fodder for the presses. But they have no authority over what is or is not issued. Those in the reissue end of the industry put together packages, then forget them and start work on the next. I once asked a good friend in such a position with CBS what he was doing at the moment. He mentioned he'd put together a package, sent it upstairs, had it rejected and then moved on to the next one. It's as simple as that.

"Management" is to blame, if that word can be used. But, at the same time, management is only as effective as their latest best-seller so they don't stick their chins out within clipping range. Each time management changes, policies change. And in today's marketplace, you won't find many cluttered management desks because the good ole boys don't stay around that long.

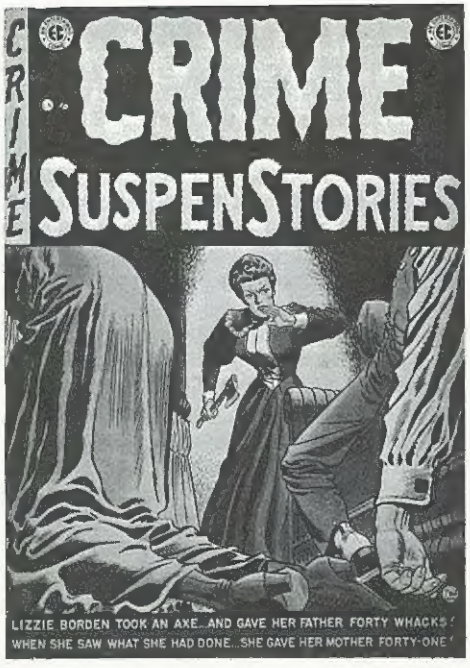
Even if a likely prospect in the reissue vein sneaks through the management maze, it still has a long lifeline to face. You, the consumer, cannot buy it if the dealer doesn't have it. And the dealer cannot sell it to you if he can't get it. And, believe me, any dealer would love to *sell* it; he counts each album he does sell as a miracle and really hates to say, "No, I don't have it."

The finished product known as records have to move through channels, from the producer, to the distributor, to the sub-distributor to the dealer, and finally, to the consumer. Any stop-up within these pipes produces a no-show. And there are many stoppages caused by the industry watchword: Will it move? And "our" product stands out when that question is asked. Reissues are limited at all stages from smaller press runs to even smaller sales—and no one except the specialist dealer is crazy enough to take the chance that it might move.

Overseas branches of our major companies operate as separate entities. Over the years they have been willing to take more chances with smaller volume in sales and shot-in-the-dark items. And they generally have a larger local market. That's why French MCA and RCA, for example, will have a product in the catalog that will never see the light of day on a domestic label. But, even the foreign firms are rapidly moving to what I call The Hamburger Philosophy: Make it of lesser quality for a price and move it out quickly.

As collectors, therefore, we'll just have to continue taking what we can find on original labels, picking up bits and pieces emanating from the majors and independents and paying through the nose as the shrinking dollar drives up overseas prices. □

©1980 Kastlemusic Monthly Bulletin, 170 Broadway, New York NY 10038 (Robert Hill, editor). Don Brown operates the Jazz Man Record Shop, 3323 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica CA 90405 (Send him your wantlists.) He also hosts "The Cobweb Corner," a weekly two-hour program of vintage jazz on KCRW-FM, Los Angeles.


CRIME
SUSPENSTORIES
LIZZIE BORDEN TOOK AN AXE...AND GAVE HER FATHER FORTY WHACKS!
WHEN SHE SAW WHAT SHE HAD DONE...SHE GAVE HER MOTHER FORTY-ONE!

THIS OLD HOUSE

It may not be everyone's retirement dream, but an Army surgeon and his wife now living in Colorado Springs, Colo., are looking forward to an eventual life of ease in Maplewood, Lizzie Borden's old house in Fall River, Mass. "We're very excited," Frances Kraft said in a telephone interview as she and her husband, Lieut. Col. Barry Kraft, prepared for the flight East to get their first look at the old Victorian mansion on which they had put a $3,500 binder payment.

Lizzie Borden, a Sunday-school teacher, moved into Maplewood after she was acquitted in August 1892 of charges that she had murdered her mother and father. Miss Borden died in 1927 at the age of 67.

"My husband and I have always been interested in Victorian houses, and when we saw a picture of the Borden house in a newspaper with a note that said it was for sale we were especially interested," Mrs. Kraft said. It was not so much the association with Lizzie Borden that attracted them but the fact that the mansion was so well preserved with original woodwork and five working fireplaces. "The historic angle was secondary at first," Mrs. Kraft said, "but then we decided to go to the library and pretty soon we had every book we could find on Lizzie Borden and we got very interested."

Mrs. Kraft said she thought the asking price for the mansion, $79,000, was very reasonable. "Maybe people thought there was a hex on the place," she said. Maplewood is being sold by Frank and Mary Silvia, who have lived in it for 33 years now. All their children have moved away and Mr. Silvia, a lawyer, said he and his wife were looking for smaller quarters. Asked if the house was being sold at a bargain price because of any Lizzie Borden stigma, Mr. Silvia replied; "No, it's higher than the going prices." He suggested there was another reason large old Victorian houses might not have skyrocketed in value: "They're hard to heat." □

PAGING PAGE

By Richard Merkin

Betty Page was the undisputed and nearly sacrosanct Princess of the Pin-Up and Queen of Bondage in the 1950's. From the late 1940's until her abrupt and unexpected departure from New York in the early 60's, Betty was the most photographed, most sought-after and most fantasied-over model in her highly competitive field. There were thousands of photos taken of her and utilized in magazines, calendars, pamphlets, films, and

TWO MORE DAVIS DISC-OVERIES By Dick Voll

Just when it was thought that all the record jackets had been located for our Jack Davis feature (pages 8-18), two more turned up—after the layouts were typeset and finished. Better late than never. Done for the 1970 Epic album CUTTIN' UP (BN 26524) by The Johnny Otis Show, this Davis cover (his second for Epic) depicts Otis (holding the saw) and members of his group doing some *non*-musical "Cuttin' Up"—the LP's title tune, a rhythm-and-blues instrumental. Otis, an R&B pioneer whose career goes back to the middle 1940s when he played the Barrel House Club in Watts (California), is probably best known for his 1958 hit single "Willie and the Hand Jive."

The 1974 RCA Camden 2-record twin set GRAND OLE OPRY STARS—GRANDPA JONES AND MINNIE PEARL (ADL2-0701e) portrays caricatures of these two Country-Western clowns in action, Grandpa with his long-handled banjo and Minnie with her latest store-bought hat. Davis' second job for RCA Camden, this watercolor illustration also features "mating season for the chickens" and a circled inset of the Grand Ole Opry Hall in Nashville, Tennessee.

that voluminous range of High Heel and Bondage production by Irving Klaw that eventually served as her major identity vehicle. Betty also posed for other mail-order firms whose subject matter was similar to Klaw's, the source of some confusion among collectors. One problem area has to do with the correct spelling of Betty Page's first name, sometimes spelled Bettie. However, the version with the final "y" was the original and correct spelling, although the other is not entirely incorrect.

There was a certain degree of under-the-counter exposure as well. Betty Page was, in a word, ubiquitous. At one time or another she appeared in every major and not-so-major men's magazines, photographed by all the leading pinup and cheesecake photographers. Her following, who were unusually faithful during the time of her reign, metamorphosed into a cult after her mysterious retirement. To this day they collect and trade her photos and swap myriad rumors of her existence and disappearance, speculating endlessly. A disappearance at the very height of her popularity and success.

NOW! THE BETTY PAGE YOU ONLY IMAGINED BACK IN THE FABULOUS 50's!
INCLUDING A BEVY OF BONDAGE FROM THE GREAT DAYS OF KLAW!
EIGHT PAGES OF CLASSY COLOR!
OVER 95 FOTOS... THE KIND MEN LIKE!
BETTY PAGE IN "HOME" SESSIONS!
TIMID TO TORRID... UNPUBLISHED FOTOS FROM PRIVATE COLLECTIONS!
THE BETTY PAGE YOU NEVER GOT TO SEE!

The uninitiated might wonder what prompts this kind of adoration, what it was that made Betty Page so special. What can one say except that Betty was *perfect*. Her physical components taken separately were not particularly staggering. At slightly over five feet her charms were not in the same league with leggy, amazonian Irish McCalla. Nor did she exude that robust out-of-door sexiness of Diane Webber, the highly photographed edge-of-the-sea lady. On the contrary, Betty was a distinctly "in-door" model. Her brand of sex appeal was more potent when pictured within four walls, preferably with furniture at hand. And, though she achieved her popularity during a tit-oriented time, she was not overly busty. She seemed relatively flat-chested when compared to the Lachaise-like charms of Tempest Storm and Evelyn "Treasure Chest" West and even more bovine types like Cherry Knight, Dolores DuVaughn and Busty Brown. Nor did Betty offer the animal heat that one got from Lilly Christine of "Cat-Girl" fame. But as a totality, the sum of all her parts, Betty was Something Else. Her figure was superbly proportioned; in high heels and stockings, from the waist down, she was akin to the Colossus of Rhodes or the Hanging Gardens of Babylon —a veritable Wonder of the World. Her hair style, later copied by a bevy of other models, lent an air of formality and discipline to a face that was otherwise bright and fresh and innocent. She was a paradox: the Tennessee farm girl trapped in the urban maze and responding in a manner of totally unpredictable sexuality that made most other models look like down-at-the-high-heels chorus bimbos, stranded in Baghdad-on-the-Hudson when burlesque split for the balmy clime of New Jersey. For all the heavy-duty trappings of the Klaw netherworld, Betty Page remained unbelievably believable.

She came to New York in the late post-war years and immediately began to get regular work as a model, though her persona was far from fully developed. By the early 50's she was appearing in Bob Harrison's fetish mags *Wink, Flirt, Titter* and *Beauty Parade.* By 1953 she had become the prize model in Irving Klaw's formidable stable, well ensconced in the genre that catapulted her into legend. From the outset it was clear that Betty Page was the quintessential bondage model. She was vulnerable and responsive to what we might call the darker urges, and her countenance was photogenic in the extreme. She defined, once and for all, the classic S-M Heroine. So much so that Art took to imitating Life, as it often does. The Ladies-in-Distress of fetish illustrators Gene Bilbrew, Eric Stanton and the fabled John Willie began to emulate Betty Page. The response to her work for Klaw was so overwhelming that he eventually produced an entire album, *Betty Page In Bondage,* which was followed by six others in the series.

Over the decade that Betty worked for Klaw, her popularity never waned. She was the Queen of Bondage. The still photographs and films made of Betty under Klaw auspices ran into the thousands, and they are highly collectible today. Most of them, however, remain permanently in the archives of afficionados. None of Klaw's output was the least pornographic as we define that term today, nor did the pictures and films contain nudity. All were in the severe stylings of the S-M melodrama. Her nude modeling certainly formed another facet of her commercial appeal, but insofar as the Klaw catalog is concerned, the standard bondage garb was used exclusively: corsets, garter belts, varied lingerie, stockings, high heels. When Klaw was finally busted in the late 50's, it was for precisely this sort of material and nothing heavier.

During her heyday, Betty Page was much in demand for personal shooting sessions which produced pictures intended solely for private use and obviously unsuited for commercial application at the time. It was verboten to exhibit pubic hair, to say nothing of any stronger gestures. Some time during the last few years of the 50's a set of beaver photos, almost certainly intended for private purposes only, were pirated and distributed to under-the-counter clientele. Consequently, these pictures were relatively widely known and the result was a good deal of notoriety for Miss Page, although the pictures are almost demure by today's standards. Many enthusiasts attribute this situation to her abrupt departure and the termination of her modeling career. Problematical as it is to speculate upon such matters, there is a strain of logic about the supposition. Her disappearance was utterly complete and successful; and while it is reasonably certain she is alive and well somewhere in the southern United States (where it's said she is happily married), she has consented to no interviews and has permitted no pictures to be taken of herself—In the past decade, at least. A rumor attributes her desire for anonymity to a strong religious commitment, but this is in the realm of conjecture without her certification. □

From the introduction to Volume #1 of ***Betty Page—Private Peeks,*** *©1978 Beller Press Inc. Four 48-page 8½ x 11 Page books have been published, and volumes #2, #3, #4 can be ordered for $7.00 each (plus 85¢ postage for one book + 35¢ for each additional) from Beller Press, PO Box BB Old Chelsea Station, New York NY 10113. "For sale to adults only" as noted on the cover repro here, so be over 21 if you order!*

JUST FOR THE RECORD

THE LP COVER ART OF JACK DAVIS

It's not easy to find an entertainment media area that hasn't been touched on by the cartoon creations of Jack Davis (not that anybody's been looking for one). We've seen his work in comic books, many of the major magazines, paperback and hardcover books. His art has shown up on television, on bubblegum cards, and on many movie posters throughout the years. There have been Davis greeting cards, ad brochures and pamphlets, and the like, but we've never really felt inundated with it in all the places we've seen it—just impressed by it. His freewheeling cartoons never fail to amuse us, delight us, and to entertain us. They cause us to appreciate his gift for cartoon caricature and his versatility of comic art expression. Davis is one of the 20th Century masters of the art, and a number of his best works can be found among the album covers he's done for various recording artists during the past 25 years. *—Dick Voll*

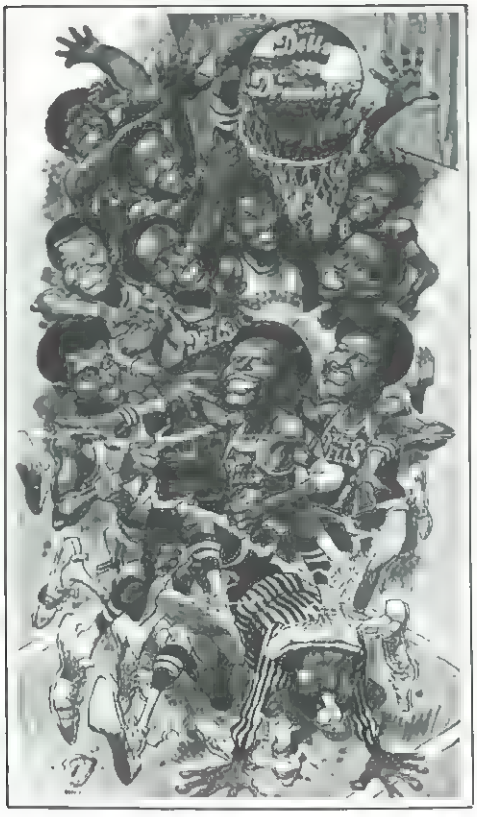
The earliest LP to feature Davis cover art was a 1957 release called THE JAZZTONE MYSTERY BAND (Jazztone J-1270), and this illustration is one of only two record jacket fronts he did solely with pen-and-ink (the other one coming out in 1964), fully detailed, in the crow-quill style he popularized in the old humor magazines (*Mad, Trump, Humbug* and *Help!*) for Harvey Kurtzman. The Jazztone Mystery Band was, in reality, Harry Arnold (billed as "one of Sweden's foremost arrangers") and his orchestra, showcased here with some fine renditions of vintage jazz tunes.

The sequence of the following Davis LP covers is by chronology of release for each record company he did work for-arranged alphabetically by label, not virtually first-to-last in overall presentation.

BUDDAH

THE VERY BEST OF THE OHIO EXPRESS/COWBOY CONVENTION, Buddah BDS 5058, has a Davis moose-head on its front, being used (and obviously weary of his job) as the train's hatrack. Seven hats adorn his antlers, one of which is the conductor's and another being that of the Mad Hatter (out of "Alice in Wonderland"). A watercolor painting with a red background, this cartoon moose is one that's apparently had it.

CADET



Cadet Records produced a double-cover, two-group portrait for its THE DELLS VS. THE DRAMATICS (Cadet CA 60027) in 1974. Both of these R&B groups are comprised of five men, and this vertical open-up cover shows them playing a basketball game that they *both* seem to be winning.

COLUMBIA

Columbia's TODAY by the New Christy Minstrels (CL 2159/CS 8959) pictures a Davis Civil War scene of a somewhat bewildered General Grant. The 1964 album contains the hit ballad "Today" and other tunes by this group (under the direction of Randy Sparks, and with Barry "Eve of Destruction" McGuire), as performed in the MGM comedy movie *Advance to the Rear.* Davis was a natural for Civil War subject matter, having illustrated many such stories in a more realistic vein for Harvey Kurtzman's EC war comics during the early 1950s-including one with a cameo appearance by the selfsame General Ulysses S. Grant in "Donelson," from *Two-Fisted Tales* #31 (January-February, 1953).

"Little" Jimmy Dickens' MAY THE BIRD OF PARADISE FLY UP YOUR NOSE (CL 2442) shows the Country & Western music star in a precarious predicament, with no well-wishers in evidence. This looks to be an impending backfire result for recording the LP's title song, a middle '60s novelty number that managed to be a hit on both country and pop charts.

Then came the collection of humorous Johnny Cash songs, EVERYBODY LOVES A NUT (CL 2492/CS 9292), with the title tune and "The One On The Right Is On The Left," "The Bug That Tried To Crawl Around The World," "The Boa Contrictor" (who has Cash partially devoured in this scene) and others.

THE MAD SHOW (Columbia Masterworks OL 6530) was an original cast recording of the off-Broadway musical revue based on *Mad* magazine, written by *Mad* writers Larry Siegel & Stan Hart, starring Linda Lavin (TV's "Alice") and Jo Anne Worley, among others. From *Mad* Associate Editor Nick Meglin's liner notes, the November 17, 1965 entry in the log of the show's pre-

production:

"At planned luncheon, lyricist Marshall Barer and composer Mary Rodgers (they did the very successful *Once Upon A Mattress)* approach publisher Bill Gaines (he does the very successful *Mad* magazine) with idea to do a *Mad* show. Gaines suggests the title *The Mad Show.* Very creative, this fellow Gaines. Gaines and *Mad* editor Al Feldstein huddle behind menu. Talk in whispers. After much discussion, major decision is revealed-Gaines chooses chopped steak rather than London broil. Very knowledgeable, this fellow Gaines. With that out of the way, Gaines consents to *Mad* show. Everyone reaches to shake hands. No one reaches for check. Very cheap, this fellow Gaines."

These four Columbia jobs were all produced by Davis in the 1960s. This one, featuring *Mad*'s mascot Alfred E. Neuman kicking off the show's proceedings, was done at about the time Davis went back to *Mad* after leaving in late 1956 to work on various other projects.

CRESTVIEW

Crestview Records'1960 album of John Zacherle's black humor, ZACHERLE'S MONSTER GALLERY, contains such cryptically comical doses of Zach as "Coolest Little Monster," "A Wicked Thought (Will Pull You Through)", "Come With Me To Transylvania," "Spider Man Lullaby," and "Baying At The Moon." Zacherle, best known as the late '50s/early '60s host of New York's *Shock Theater*, was the most famous of the TV horror movie-hosts, starting out in Philadelphia as "Roland." He had a hit single in 1958 called "Dinner With Drac." MONSTER GALLERY gave Davis a chance to get back to his horror comics type of scene, the painting reminding EC comics readers of all those Davis splash panels which pictured the Crypt Keeper and an assortment of ghouls and beasties, with Zach as CK's "replacement." Crestview Records was a subsidiary of Elektra, and the record was CRS-7803 on this short-lived label.

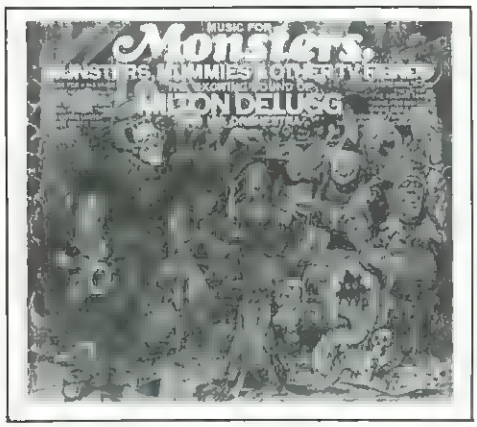
ELEKTRA

A 1971 comedy album on Elektra (EKS-74085) by Richard Nixon imitator David Frye called RADIO FREE NIXON sported Davis caricatures of Frye as Nixon, and some other American notables trying to get a word in, too. This LP features a bit called "The Dick Nixon Show" and fifteen other short impressions routines including Frye as Billy Graham, Howard Cosell, the late Nelson Rockefeller, and others.

MOTORCYCLE MAMA (Elektra EKS-75029) was a 1972 rock LP by a duo called Sailcat (Court Pickett and John Wyker). Each of the songs has an ink and watercolor scene illustrating it on the two inside covers of this open-up album, as well as the same-medium cover illustration of a motorcycle family simpler in its execution than most of the other Davis record covers, yet also very powerful in its simplicity. When he left the office after signing to do the artwork for this album, Davis overheard one of the two guys who were Sailcat ask, "Why'd you go and get an *old man* to do the artwork? (Davis: "As you know, I always wear my hair short and I wear a business suit.")

EPIC

The inside open-up spread from Sailcat's MOTORCYCLE MAMA



An album of familiar (and some not so familiar) tunes associated with horror TV shows and movies, performed by Milton Delugg and his Orchestra titled MUSIC FOR MONSTERS, MUNSTERS, MUMMIES & OTHER TV FIENDS (LN-24125) came out on Epic in the mid 1960s with two cover variations—one a photo of the cast of the television horror-comedy sitcom "The Munsters," and the other a Davis group scene with Frankenstein leading the assemblage of creatures. Musical contents are same on both records: "The Munsters" theme, theme from "The Addams Family," "Ghost Meets Ghoul," "Theme For King Kong," "The Alfred Hitchcock Theme," and more. The Davis cover is another array of odd souls, but quite a bit tamer than the group he did for Zacherle.

MGM

MGM came out with several LPs utilizing Davis' talents. MANY HAPPY RETURNS OF THE DAY (E/SE 4087) has many of out commonest songs, from "Easter Parade" to "Graduation Day" to "Happy Birthday To You" (the ditty that has been sung more than any other song, written in 1893 by two school-teaching sisters, Mildred and Patty Hill) to "Auld Lang Syne" (the third most popular song of all time). An "occasion" LP for many occasions, arranged and conducted by Richard Wolfe.

There was a series on MGM by song parodist Sheb Wooley, who by that time in his musical career had adopted the recording pseudonym "Ben Colder." Wooley was also an actor (under his own name), appearing regularly as the third lead (with Eric Fleming and Clint Eastwood) on the 1958-65 TV series *Rawhide*. His records with Davis covers began with SPOOFING THE BIG ONES! (E/SE-4117) featuring hit-song lampoons of Burl Ives' "Little Bitty Tear" ("Little Bitty Steer") and Johnny Cash's "I Walk The Line" ("I Walk The Line No 2").

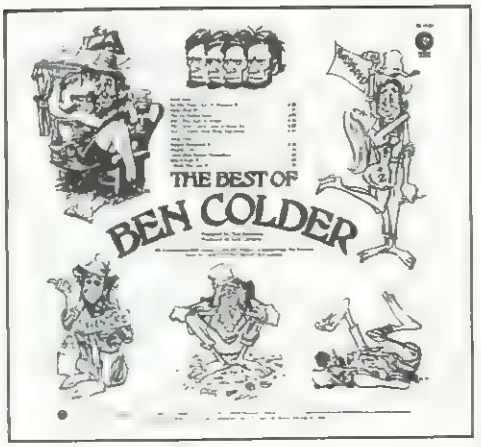
On a record jacket fully as busy and wild as the honkytonk piano music inside it is a Davis cartoon of Crazy Otto (real name Fritz Schulz-Reichel) demolishing his piano, for CRAZY OTTO (CRAZY OTTO PLAYS CRAZY TUNES) on MGM E/SE-4150 from the mid-'60s. Every tune on the album (which was recorded in Germany) has the word "crazy" in its title: "You're Driving Me Crazy," "Crazy Words," etc. Schulz-Reichel

(who looked like a fortyish Milton Caniff, with a touch of Bob Hope) adopted the name Crazy Otto when his honkytonk music career began in 1953 (which he decided would be more fun than being a concert pianist—and it was, starting with his '50s hit single "Crazy Otto Medley," going on to record many other singles and at least nine albums) and this cover is Jack's maddest one for MGM, the only Otto LP to be released on that label.

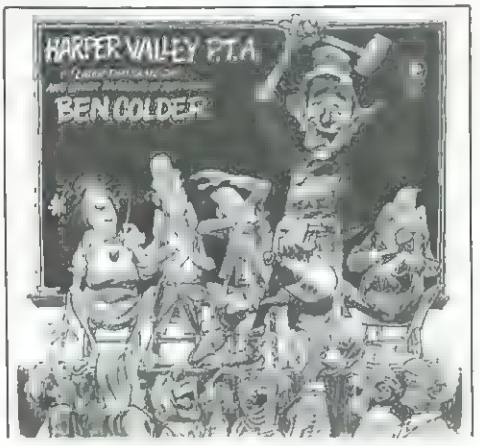
Next came BIG BEN STRIKES AGAIN (E/SE-4421), containing Colder's "Almost Persuaded No. 2," "Time After Time After Time," "I Walk The Line No. 3," "May The Bird Of Paradise Fly Up Your Snoot," and others.

WINE WOMEN & SONG (E/SE-4482), the third Colder Davis-cover album, contained "Ain't It Funny How Wine Sips Away" and "The Purple People Eater No. 2" (a second version of what was originally a hit by Wooley in the 1950s).

Then there was THE BEST OF BEN COLDER (E/SE-4530), the cover of which was a Colder farm-family portrait in which everybody, and everything, bears a suspicious resemblance to old Colder himself. This album also sports six smaller Davis cartoons, mostly of Colder, on its back cover.



Before the last Wooley/Colder Davis-cover LP came out, MGM issued a collection of songs by the Cowsill family titled THE BEST OF THE COWSILLS (E/SE-4597), with Davis' portrait of that family rock group in frenetic action on the front cover and each of them in a black-and-white illustration, relaxing, on the back one.



The 1968 HARPER VALLEY P.T.A. (E/SE-4614) Colder album featured the last of Davis' covers from that string of releases, this scene depicting Colder as a country bumpkin freaking out Harper Valley school dignitaries. Song satires include "Harper Valley P.T.A. (Later That Same Day)", "Folsom Prison Blues #1½," and "Ode To The Little Brown Shack Out Back." More of his "drunken stupor" type of musical wit.

RCA & CAMDEN

Davis' covers for RCA represent his largest output for any one record company, and many of these qualify as bests in all respects. This could be due to the fact that Davis was given what he considered to be a big break by an RCA art director named Acy R. Lehman in 1958, when times were relatively lean for Davis. He was assigned the job of doing cover art for 6 FAT DUTCHMEN (LPM/LSP-1769), and the result was a scene of the oom-pah-pah group carrying on in a musical-absurdity vein reminiscent of Spike Jones. The back cover had a sequence-cartoon by Robert Blechman, whose work also appeared in many of Kurtzman's old satire magazines.

The next cover was for BOB & RAY THROW A STEREO SPECTACULAR (LSP-1773), a 1958 stereophonic sound sampler interspersed with bits of Bob Elliott & Ray Goulding comedy. On the left are Skitch Henderson and Abbe Lane, and to the right Lena Horne and Julie Andrews.

Then came the first of a long string of RCA covers for Homer (Henry E. Haynes) and Jethro (Jethro Burns): LIFE CAN BE MISERABLE (LPM/LSP-1880), a fine example of Davis cartoon confusion. Homer & Jethro were popular contemporary song parodists, best known for their intentionally hokey Grand Ol' Opry-styled comedy, who also were prolific RCA sidemen (mandolin & guitar) on lesser-known recordings of instrumentals in the jazz/Western Swing vein, along with providing backup on many Chet Atkins sessions.

A 1959 collection of humorous horror songs by Alice Pearce and the late Hans Conried, MONSTER RALLY (LPM/LSP-1923) sports a classic Davis painting—blending horror and humor into what amounts to a

cutely-weird piece of art. Davis has mentioned that this scene is one he really enjoyed doing and that he was quite pleased with. An ad for this album in issues of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* from back then read "An insane and fantastically entertaining album featuring Hans Conried and Alice Pearce, singing and screaming ghoulish new songs like 'Monster Rally,' 'The Thing,' 'The Invisible Man,' 'Not Of This Earth' and others. The album cover by artist Jack Davis is a masterpiece-suitable for framing."

Frank Jacobs.

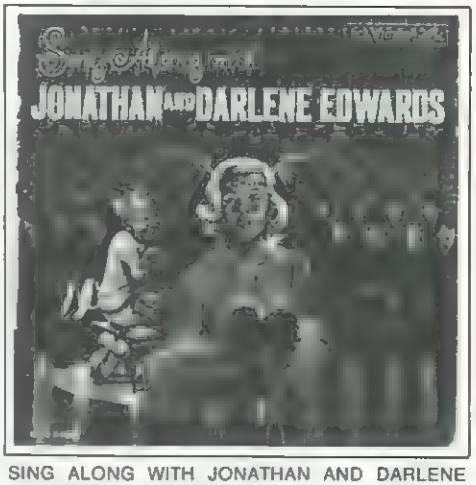
The black-and-white art on the back of THANK YOU, MUSIC LOVERS! was recycled thirteen years later, with full-color added by another artist for *front* covers of two 2-LP reissue sets on German RCA, titled SPIKE JONES MURDERS THEM ALL and SPIKE JONES MURDERS AGAIN (1973). Jacobs' original liner notes are printed in English and in a German translation, only minus his credit line in both cases. The centerspreads of these open-ups were an enlargement of the front for THANK YOU, MUSIC LOVERS!, cropped across top and bottom for a wide angle CinemaScope-like scene, printed in blue ink only. Thus, for this Deutsche Pressung, Davis' 1960 full-color cover got the monochrome treatment and his black-and-white was converted to full-color.

From horror-comedy to Latin cha-cha, RCA LPM-2187, released in 1960, CHA CHA WITH TITO PUENTE AT GROSSINGER'S featured a bongo-playing "tiger" Tito enjoying the cha-cha of a lovely Latin lady, and behind them is the scene of an evening outdoor party at this Catskill Mountains, New York, vacation resort. Recorded on the spot in the grand ballroom at Grossinger's.

THANK YOU, MUSIC LOVERS!, a 1960 grouping of Spike Jones' biggest hits (LPM/LSP-2224), pictures Spike in a state of complete tranquility amidst all the confusion of a trampling crowd. A Davis black-and-white wash of Jones conducting adorns the back cover, which also features liner notes by MAD writer

The Homer & Jethro "Whistler's Mother" painting by Davis for the 1961 SONGS MY MOTHER NEVER SANG (LPM/LSP-2286), showed the country comedians doing some eager but easy listening-a stereo album for sure. One of this LP's tunes is "She Was Bitten On The Udder By An Adder."

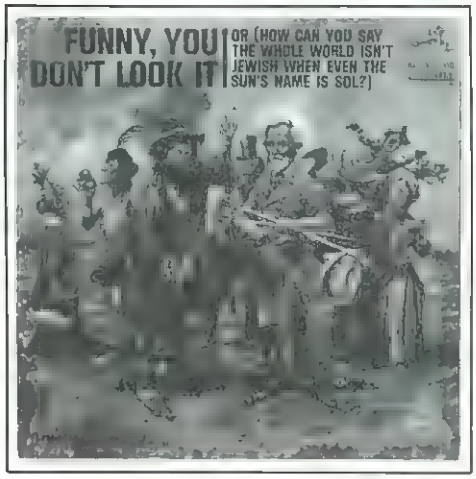
Then came their ZANY SONGS OF THE '30s (LPM/LSP-2455), with "Mairzy Doats" and the Fats Waller "Your Feets Too Big," followed by HOMER AND JETHRO AT THE CONVENTION (LPM/LSP-2492), made during the annual Country Music Association banquet by "the juvenile delinquents who grew up to be dirty old men."



SING ALONG WITH JONATHAN AND DARLENE EDWARDS (LPM/LSP-2495), released in 1962, is one of their satire albums featuring the off-key singing of Darlene (Jo Stafford) and the florid piano variations of Jonathan (Paul Weston), backed by a typical male chorus. This duo was unique in its musical absurdity, a true challenge to sing along with.

HOMER AND JETHRO GO WEST (LPM/LSP-2674), 1963, another one by "The Ballad Butchers," showcased a Davis scene of the boys sailing through it all on a "Wells Far Gone" stagecoach.

A 1964 RCA release titled DRACULA'S GREATEST HITS (LPM/LSP-2977) sported front and back pen-and-ink monster gallery covers. The album, with voice characterizations by Gene Moss, gave horror fans another taste of "EC" Davis. Inside the LP jacket were still more creatures on a "15 Monster Fan Cards" bonus sheet, including such famous horror personalities as the Frankenstein monster, Mr. Hyde, the Mummy, Phantom of the Opera, the Wolfman and others, each an expertly detailed piece of work. Some of these Fan Card portraits can be seen on this issue's back cover.

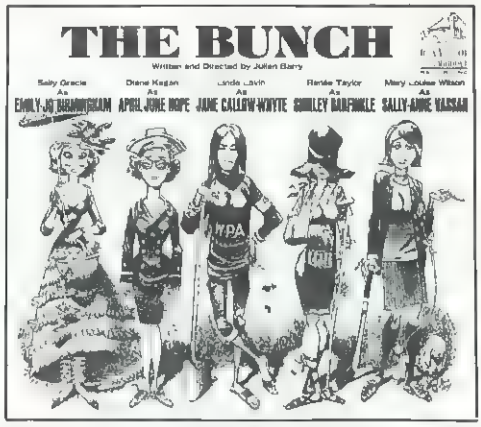


FUNNY, YOU DON'T LOOK IT--OR (HOW CAN YOU SAY THE WHOLE WORLD ISN'T JEWISH WHEN EVEN THE SUN'S NAME IS SOL?) (LPM/LSP-3433) in 1966 was a Jewish history-comedy release (recorded live at The Boulevard, a New York supper club) which "proves" that all of the world's great historical figures were Jewish. The cover scene is oil-on-canvas, unique for its partial realism.

Another by Homer and Jethro, THE OLD CRUSTY MINSTRELS (LPM/LSP-3462), has an interesting bit of censorship connected with it. When first released, a sign on the brick wall behind the two read "Sig Manure," and then a later printing of the same cover art had this detail changed to "Sig Nature."

Comedian Archie Campbell (the "Hee Haw" newcaster) was given the Davis treatment for HAVE A LAUGH ON ME (LPM/LSP-3504) in 1966. Campbell's recorded absurdities here include "Flushed From The Bathroom of Your Heart" and the spooneristic "Rindercella" and "Beeping Sleauty." One wonders just what sort of sound is being produced by this Davis musical quartet which Campbell has been entertaining. The liner notes by mandolinist Jethro Burns (of Homer & Jethro) refer to Campbell as "the perfect example of the man who worked a lifetime in order to be an overnight sensation."

ANY NEWS FROM NASHVILLE? (LPM/LSP-3538), 1966, shows Homer and Jethro waiting for some word, and songs include "Act Naturally" and "The Lousiest Record."


THE BUNCH
Written and Directed by Julian Barry
Sally Gracie As EMILY-JO BIRMINGHAM
Diane Kagan As APRIL JUNE HOPE
Linda Lavin As JANE CALLOW-WHYTE
Renee Taylor As SHIRLEY GARFINKLE
Mary Louise Wilson As SALLY-ANNE VASSAR
WPA

Another crowquill-and-ink job appears on a 1966 Broadway show comedy album, THE BUNCH (RCA LPM/LSP-3629), with added touches of charcoal and orange watercolor. It depicts five women (and one white-haired poodle) who were all Jones College roommates in the 1930s—Sally Gracie as Emily-Jo Birmingham, Diane Kagan as April June Hope, Linda Lavin ("Alice" again) as Jane Callow-Whyte, Renee Taylor as Shirley Garfinkle, and Mary Louise Wilson as Sally-Anne Vassar. Written and directed by Julian Barry (who did three one-hours segments for NBC-TV's "The Wackiest Ship In The Army" in the '60s), this show was recorded live in Webster Hall, New York City.

Next came H & J's NASHVILLE CATS (LPM/LSP-3822) in 1967. "She Loves You" (another Beatles tune) and "Winchester Cathedral" (done originally by the British group The New Vaudeville Band and later by Frank Sinatra, of all people), are satirized on this LP.

Seventies RCA albums with Davis covers included 1200 HAMBURGERS TO GO (LPM/LSP-4699) by Imus In The Morning (Don Imus), featuring comedy

routines from his New York radio show, and THIS IS MYRON COHEN, an open-up two-LP set of Cohen humor formerly available as two earlier LPs on RCA (3534 and 3791). Both the Imus and the Cohen set came out in 1972.

A second Davis cover for Imus In The Morning was 1973's ONE SACRED CHICKEN TO GO (LSP-4819), which is of the "Portions of this recording may not be suitable for radio airplay" variety. Cuts include "Oh Billy Sol Please Heal Us All," "The First National Bank of Him," and "Hebrew National-The Wings of Him." The back cover is a black & white wash showing the healing power of Imus over the airwaves, a la 1950s-vintage Oral Roberts.

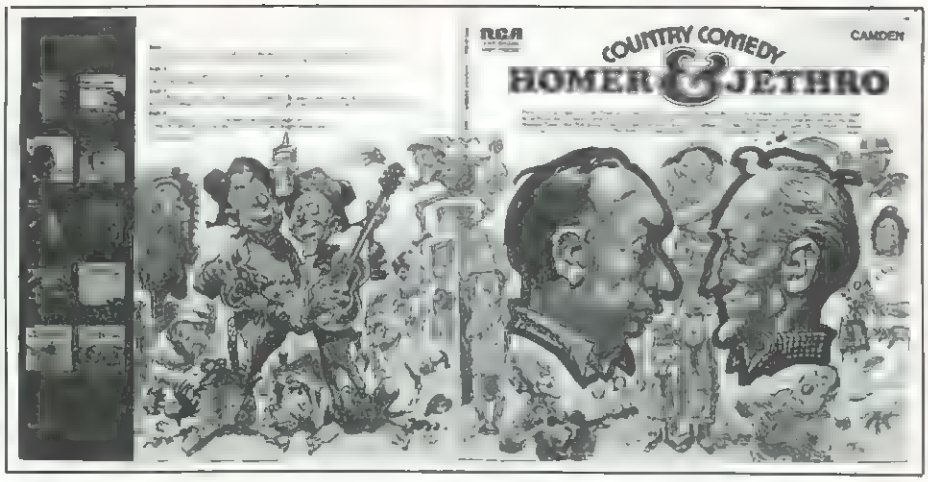
THE UPTOWN POKER CLUB (APL 1-0356), a 1973 RCA album by Jerry Reed pictures a menacing Reed wielding a straight-razor in front of some fellow card players. And THE BEST OF SPIKE JONES (ANL 1-1035e) in 1975 (not pictured) had a blow-up of the Davis caricature of Jones from an old RCA Extended Play 45 rpm called, simply, SPIKE JONES.

THE GREATEST OF THE GUESS WHO (APL 1-2253) In 1977 had a front-and-back "continued" cover (though not an open-up) of this famous rock group having a wild bash.

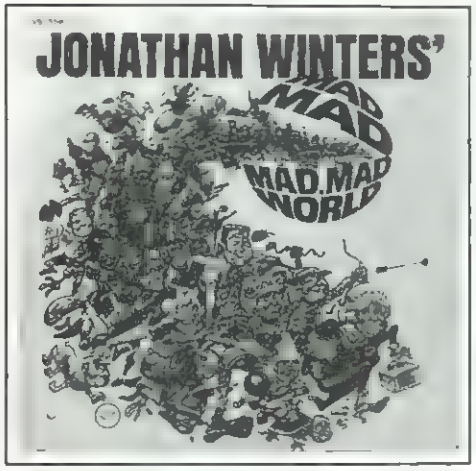
A black-and-white wash portrait of Floyd Cramer adorns another 1977 RCA release, FLOYD CRAMER & THE KEYBOARD KICK BAND (APL 1-2278), an easy-listening LP of his distinctive piano stylings. The liner notes by Don Cusic state "Floyd *is* the Keyboard Kick Band and through the process of overdubbing in a 24-track studio plays *eight* keyboard instruments."

And a 1980 Jerry Reed LP titled TEXAS BOUND AND FLYIN' (AHL 1-3771) again features Reed by Davis, this time cavorting around on a truck. Title song is from Burt Reynolds' film *Smokey and the Bandit II.*

Additional RCA works by Davis include two EPs in the Gold Standard Series: SPIKE JONES (EPA-5058) and PHIL HARRIS (EPA-5127), and a black-and-white wash drawing for the picture sleeve of the Wayward Bus' 45 "The Prophet" (Predictions By David Hoy). Also, an open-up double cover for an RCA Camden two-LP set of Homer & Jethro's best, called COUNTRY COMEDY (CXS-9012e), released in 1971 after Homer's death (August 7, 1971). There were also EPs for their LIFE CAN BE MISERABLE album, utilizing Davis' cover art from that one.



VERVE



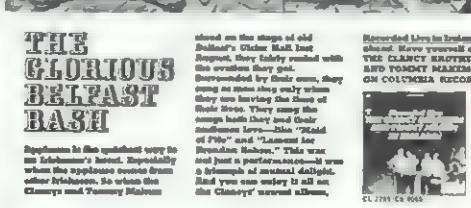
On Verve there was JONATHAN WINTERS' MAD, MAD, MAD, MAD WORLD (V6-15041), containing some of the better cuts from previous Winters albums. The cover is an array of characterizations in a scramble scene similar to Davis' earlier poster art for the 1963 movie *It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World* in which Winters appeared, only this time *everybody* looks like Winters himself.

Vaughn Meader's HAVE SOME NUTS!!! (V-15042) had a photo of Meader (whose early '60s *The First Family* sold more copies than any LP in history up to that time) releasing a canful of Davis-style human variety Mixed Nuts. It features topical satire by stand-up comedian Meader, whose career as a John F. Kennedy impressionist went into limbo immediately after JFK's assassination in 1963. Years later Meader made something of a comeback doing other comedy routines, even reviving to an extent his JFK monologues, but he's never managed to regain his former popularity.

THE RISE & FALL OF THE GREAT SOCIETY (V-15051), a series of Charlie Manna's comedy bits, has a Davis mob scene picturing late 60's Americana in the hippie-and-student-protest vein replete with a nuked swimming pool.

There are also ten or more Davis album covers for various motion picture soundtracks, most of which have the same illustrations used on the movie posters for those films (these will be covered in a future issue of *Fanfare*). If any readers know of other Davis LP or EP record cover art (for records other than movie soundtracks) not mentioned and pictured in this article, please send that information to *Fanfare*. There are no doubt some we have missed in this survey.

Three ending pieces are oddments related to Davis' album cover art, though not directly a part of it: his ad for the album RECORDED LIVE IN IRELAND (Columbia CL 2265-CS 9065) by the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem from the April 1965 issue of *Playboy*, the September 1971 *Ebony* cover of The Jackson 5, and an RCA Records ad from the April 1974 issue of *Music Retailer* (see next page), a group portrait of their Country & Western stars.

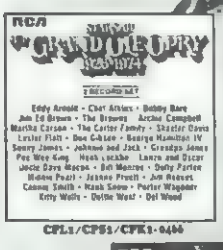


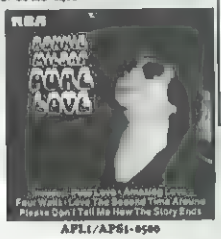
Like the works of all great artists, bests and worsts are a matter of personal opinion, but certainly at least a few of these record jacket illustrations rate spots in the Top Ten of Davis bests.

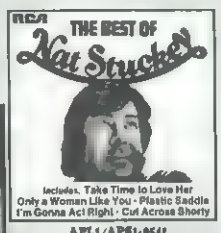
If you got a hunger for some good ole down home fixins, RCA's got the country that's cookin'

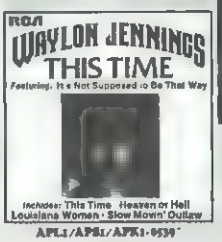
Startin' this month and continuin' through the end of May, RCA is launchin' one of the biggest country wing-dings ever. With a whole array of major new releases by all of our biggest country stars, plus one of the biggest trade and consumer advertising support programs in our history (including ad kits, order forms, wall posters, mobile and standing album displays, Country Cookin' consumer catalogs, match boxes, radio spots, trade and consumer advertising), RCA's Country Cookin' Promotion for 1974 is just the kind of traffic buildin', instant sell you've been waitin' for. So come and get 'em. RCA's Country Cookin' is just what your customers are cravin' for.

Country Cookin' 1974
RCA Records and Tapes

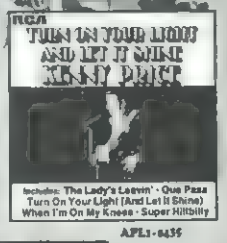

RCA
Eddy Arnold · Chet Atkins · Bobby Bare
Jim Ed Brown · The Browns · Archie Campbell
Martha Carson · The Carter Family · Skeeter Davis
Lester Flatt · Don Gibson · George Hamilton IV
Sonny James · Johnnie and Jack · Grandpa Jones
Pee Wee King · Hank Locklin · Loretta and Oscar
Jackie Dave Macon · Bill Monroe · Dolly Parton
Widow Pearl · Jeanne Pruett · Jim Reeves
Cas Walker · Hank Snow · Porter Wagoner
Kitty Wells · Dottie West · Del Wood
CPL1/CPS1/CFK1-0496




RCA
THE BEST OF
Nat Stuckey
Includes: Take Time to Love Her
Only a Woman Like You · Plastic Saddle
I'm Gonna Act Right · Cut Across Shorty
APL1/APS1-0541



RCA
Includes: Tore Down · The Fiddle Song
Graduation Day · Somewhere In The Night
Nothing Between · Old Black Kettle
APL1/APS1/APK1-0494


RCA
TURN ON YOUR LIGHT
AND LET IT SHINE
KENNY PRICE
Includes: The Lady's Leavin' · Que Pasa
Turn On Your Light (And Let It Shine)
When I'm On My Knees · Super Hillbilly
APL1-0436

These portraits of some famous recording stars are from an Exxon advertisement in the November 25 1974 issue of *Time* magazine:

Bob & Ray
Johnny Cash
Helen Reddy
B.B. King
Bill Cosby

Jack Davis photo taken by Kyle Hailey at the March 1982 Dimension Convention In New York City.

CHESTER GOULD'S DICK TRACY

In 1970 Chelsea House publishers put out a book of comic strips, *The Celebrated Cases of Dick Tracy*. On the front cover there are no words to designate a title, only a cartoon — a boldly-drawn bust figure of a man in profile looking straight and determinedly to the left. Almost the entire cover is done in two glaring, primary colors undiluted by variations of value or intensity. Chelsea knew they needed no words here because by the 1970s nearly every American, upon seeing this drawing, immediately attached the name to it.

We all know who Dick Tracy is, but what does he stand for? Many have tried to put this into words. In one way or another they mostly seem to fall short. Some fail to take into account the complexity of the strip. Others simply misrepresent it.

The best way to start looking for meaning is to consider the words of its creator, Chester Gould. He is quoted as saying his prime motivation for creating the strip in 1931 was the climate of crime that prevailed during Prohibition. He felt that people wanted a character who would smash big-shot gangsters. He believed his comic strip could develop a wide following if he used it to express the public's moral outrage.

Gould has made some rather strong statements about criminals. In an interview with Ellery Queen in *Celebrated Cases*, he states that crime is ugly. Because of this, the criminal characters in the strip are ugly. Their outer appearance is meant to reflect their inner evil.

Tracy, on the other hand, is good. He is society's protector, a wish fulfillment for all honest citizens who want to fight back against criminal predators in society. Tracy's adopted son, Junior, time and time again states that Tracy is the perfect model after which he intends to pattern his own life.

BY ROBERT KING

Tracy fights criminals on no uncertain terms. Gould prefers that his hero use what he terms "the hot lead route." There is no compromising, no permissiveness. Tracy deals with the criminals violently and decisively with direct and forceful action. Their evil allows for no half measures and no weakness.

Dick Tracy is about good versus evil, justice versus crime, hero versus villain. Gould has polarized his two prime story elements (protagonist and antagonist) to create a sharply defined vision of good and evil that is powerful enough to express our emotional reaction against crime and criminals. This is what Dick Tracy has meant to millions of people for over fifty years. One must accept that as the simple message of his comic strip.

Yet, many of us feel an urge to go beyond Mr. Gould's basic intentions and find more meaning. Gould's original intent may suffice to explain why he started the strip, but what explains why he kept going? Could anything as simple as "good versus evil" keep a man creating for nearly fifty years? Gould gave his life to the strip. There must be much more to it.

Recently a writer in a comic strip reprint paper stated that Dick tracy is "Calvinistic." This seemed a strange thing to say. He didn't bother to explain what he meant by the word. I couldn't see what put it in his head until I discovered that Arthur Asa Berger used it in his book *The Comic-Stripped American*. Berger also tags Tracy with this term in a rather senseless way. I couldn't understand why he felt compelled to use it until I found Robert H. Abel in *The Funnies: An American Idiom* used "Calvinistic" to describe Harold Gray's *Little Orphan Annie*. But Abel differed from his two successors by explaining how the term specifically related to *Annie*.

This shows how hard it is to find something sensible in print about Dick Tracy. The people who write about the strip seldom bother to express themselves coherently. Berger devotes a whole chapter in his book to Tracy and yet one feels he never seriously meant to understand the strip. Instead he uses Gould's creation as a container with which to hold ideas he has encountered in his academic studies. The strip itself is not important to Berger, so he lets what is important, the ideas he favors and writes about, overwhelm his ostensible subject matter. This is shown in the way he uses several long quotes from various authors, and yet not once does he make a detailed examination of any specific Tracy continuity.

I disagree with his approach and it seems to me that Berger would too if he took a good look at what it did to his understanding. His basic misunderstanding overwhelms the few rays of insight he manages to come upon. This explains the errors and contradictions one finds in his writing.

At one point he states "There is not much in the way of ambiguity or complexity in Dick Tracy. People are either good or bad." While Tracy and his foes usually fall into the good/evil polarity, this is an inaccurate description of the strip as a whole. Berger should have considered the Bob Honor story of 1935 in which Tracy helps turn a vicious criminal into a solid citizen. He also should have considered the collection of reformed criminals that gathers around Tracy as the years go by. This group includes none other than Tracy's adopted son Junior.

Berger later contradicts his statement about the lack of complexity and ambiguity. Somehow he stumbles onto the idea that readers not only identify with the detective in crime stories, but also with the criminal. This important realization goes against the grain of his overall depiction of the strip as appealing to and being based on a narrow, bigoted moral attitude. So although Berger sees this element of ambiguity, he does not let it affect his overall view.

This leads him to the disastrous last paragraph of his chapter. In the space of a few sentences he completely contradicts himself. He first states that Tracy is old-fashioned, outmoded and no longer reflects meaningfully on our society. Next he admits unabashedly that the strip has a basic and enduring appeal to a large segment of society. He doesn't bother to explain this contradiction. He then winds up with nonsense about Tracy being the "servant of a stern God in a never-ending quest for the

sublimity of a community of saints." That phrase shows how far afield one can go if one fails to base ideas on a firm footing. Without a detailed and specific examination of a work of art, it's inevitable that one should end up saying something so ludicrously off the mark.

Discussions of Gould's drawing style often are handled no better. Maurice Horn is considered to be one of the authorities of comic strip study. He scarcely does us a service, though, when he tries to describe Gould's art in *A History of the Comic Strip*. At one point he refers to Gould's "one-dimensional drawings." It is hard to conceive of a one-dimensional drawing. I can only imagine that it would be a single straight line of no perceivable width. I assume that Horn meant to say *two*-dimensional drawings, but even this would be wrong. Gould uses most of the techniques that artists commonly employ to create the illusion of three dimensions. A glance at the strip reveals numerous examples of foreshortening, overlapping and variation of scale.

Horn can take comfort in the fact that Jim Steranko wrote a still more improbable description of Gould's art. In his book, *The Steranko History of Comics*, the author blithely states, "If Gould had any knowledge of perspective he kept it to himself." The truth is that over the years Gould used satisfactory perspective in Dick Tracy literally thousands of times.

One potentially good article on Tracy was skewered by editorial error. Rick Marschall, one of the best writers on comic art, wrote a short piece in the Museum of Cartoon Art booklet published in conjunction with a 1978 exhibit of Gould's art. In that article is the statement, "Gould like...Harold Gray...was never, never a realist...These men were both impressionists...their impressionistic techniques pervaded every element of their creations..."

Anyone who knows anything about art realizes it's absurd to call Gould's art impressionistic. A certain fanzine editor resolutely defended Marschall's use of this word until Mr. Marschall informed him that the word is a typo. Marschall explained that the word he actually used, before editor Bill Crouch got his hands on the manuscript, was "expressionistic." A much more sensible word, but unfortunately the typo made nonsense of Marschall's article.

To add to the confusion involved in trying to understand this strip, there is another problem. Liberals and other leftists have denounced Tracy as right-wing propaganda. Arthur Asa Berger's failure to appreciate the strip comes not just from his questionable method of approach. One feels a political and cultural conflict also blinds his vision. He does not want to appreciate the strip because he dislikes its political overtones.

A good example of the liberal disdain for Dick Tracy is a prison expose broadcast by TV's Phil Donahue in the early Seventies. He specifically tied the sub-standard treatment of prisoners to the influence of the concept of criminals as being totally evil and bestial. Donahue claimed that Dick Tracy is one of the prominent sources of this harmful concept. This is a powerful condemnation of Gould's work and it is echoed by many others.

Admittedly Gould has taken a strongly conservative stand, espousing the simple dogma that crime does not pay. He has always stood for law and order. His sympathies have always been with the police (though he has occasionally criticized them) and not with the criminals. This is an important part

of the strip's message, and there is no use equivocating here.

However, liberal critics are forgetting something when they criticize Gould too harshly. Gould is not out of the mainstream of American opinion on the subject of crime. Some forget there is a basic consensus here that both sides belong to. Both liberals and conservatives generally see the criminals as being of two types. There is first the weak, unlucky and sometimes pathetic criminal who falls helplessly into crime. Liberals and conservatives agree that this type should be punished, but most importantly he should also be helped back into society. Dick Tracy does not persecute this kind of criminal. He would lose his hero status and the sympathy of the reader if he did.

The second criminal type is the strong and violent predator who feeds off honest citizens unable to resist his strength. Both liberals and conservatives hate this kind. Leftists often see this strong criminal as a worst-case capitalist—one who recognizes no law but his own and is willing to inflict any injury in pursuit of his private gain. This type makes a liberal's blood boil and makes Chester Gould's blood boil, too—precisely the type of criminal upon whom Gould has unleashed his relentless detective.

What with the hazards involved in examining a body of work so large and covering such a great space of time, it wouldn't be wise to make too many absolute and binding definitions. The strip obviously changes over the years. Thus I'll focus on just one period and one story, "Jerome Trohs and Mamma," which ran between April and July of 1940. This period interests me because I feel it was at this time that Gould's talents finally came to fruition.

The story concerns a midget (Trohs is "short" spelled backwards) with a giant ego who betrays his gang leader and then takes control of the gang. With the help of his wife, the hulking Mamma, he keeps the gang members in line. They pull off several highly successful heists in short order. They even give Tracy a good beating and take special care to crush and render useless his gun hand. Mamma, meanwhile, manhandles Tracy's partner Pat Patton by throwing him through a plate glass window.

However, Tracy counterattacks and soon has Trohs, Mamma and the rest of the gang in custody. Trohs proves to be a little too slick, though. He escapes and heads west with a rodeo. He soon has a hideout in the mountains, an off-the-road tourist camp which he swindles from an old couple. Meanwhile, Mamma, cooling her heels in prison, spots a newsreel featuring Trohs, made while he was with the rodeo. She tells Tracy about it and then, unable to control her desire for revenge, breaks out of jail and heads west. She feels Trohs has double-crossed her since he did not help her to escape.

Mamma gets revenge when she traps Trohs in a shower box at the tourist camp and douses him with scalding water. Tracy arrives too late to save Trohs and is promptly pounced upon by Mamma. She nearly kills him before he manages to choke her into unconsciousness. Tracy brings her back handcuffed, but she has succeeded. Vengeance is hers. Trohs dies a horrible death.

To fully understand this story we must first examine the artwork. All comic artists can be placed somewhere on a spectrum ranging between two polar opposites. One pole is abstraction and the other is representation. The cartoonist's style belongs in the abstract range and the illustrator's style belongs to the representational range. Otto Messmer, of Felix the Cat fame, was an artist who tended toward the abstract. Hal Foster was a representational artist whose work in *Prince Valiant* is wholly realistic. The amount of abstraction or representation an artist uses is going to determine in a radical way the effect of his art. Looking at Gould's work, one quickly discovers ambiguity and complexity. There seems to be no simple category for his art.

Studying the characters, they are all caricatures and rather extreme ones at that. There is nothing of the illustrator's style here. The features are all unrealistic. Stephen Becker, in his book *Comic Art in America,* says that Tracy and his friends are normal enough and that only the criminals are abnormal. But Tracy's square jaw and eagle beak are like nothing found among your average, garden-variety human beings. Junior's face makes a witch doctor's fright mask look tame. They are all in an abstract, cartoonist's style. Gould has distilled the spirit of his characters, submerging ambiguous and subtle particulars of real people. He has drawn out the single characteristic quality in each face and figure.

Yet, there is something strange here. We usually think of the cartoon style as retaining the abstract appearance of its basic building blocks: spheres, ovals, cones, squares, etc. But, these abstract forms are muted in Gould's work. Gould appears to use no formula, no complicated proportioning, no dependence on artistic devices to achieve verisimilitude. He seems to be using some instinctive—not learned—style of his own, drawing as the spirit moves him, giving free reign to create powerful and primitive images. Complicated techniques would only get in the way, interfering with the feelings he is trying to transmit through his art, feelings that well up from some secret source within him.

Turning to backgrounds or settings we notice there are two different and distinct styles of drawing contained within panels. The characters are cartoons, but the settings are drawn in a more realistic illustrator's style. Gould does not use his instictive approach to draw objects. He relies on techniques he was taught in art courses. He carefully draws objects as neatly and precisely as he can.

REMOVING THE BADLY SCALDED MIDGET FROM THE SHOWER BATH, TRACY RUSHES INTO THE HOUSE TO GET "MAMMA" WHILE THE SHERIFF KEEPS WATCH OVER JEROME ...
BETTER HELP TRACY. THAT FAT WOMAN'LL KILL 'IM! SHE'LL KILL 'IM!
7-8-40
YEAH, THE DETECTIVE'S GOT ONE ARM IN A SLING - MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT - SAY, WHAT IN - ?
I'VE LOOKED FORWARD TO THE CHANCE OF SQUARING THINGS WITH YOU, "ONE-ARM", FOR A LONG TIME AND THIS IS MY CHANCE.
THOSE SCALDS WERE TOO MUCH FOR HIM. HE'S DYIN'! HE'S DYIN'!

I TELL YOU, MR TRACY, THEY WERE VICIOUS CHARACTERS. BUT THAT LITTLE GUY MUST BE AWFULLY SMALL TO FIT INTO THAT GRIP THAT WAY.
WERE YOU ABLE TO SEE HIS FACE?
NO, BUT THEY HAD TWO PALS STANDING GUARD IN THE LOBBY AND I GOT A GOOD LOOK AT THEM.
HM.
WELL, THERE WE ARE! SEVEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY SMACKERS APIECE FOR FIVE MINUTES WORK. NOT BAD.
SAY, SOMEBODY BETTER TAKE THAT DOG OUT FOR SOME AIR. HE'S BEEN COOPED UP HERE SINCE MORNING.
I'LL WALK HIM.

5-14-40

OKAY - HE'LL NEVER DO ANY SHOOTING WITH THAT HAND AGAIN.
WHAT TIME IS IT?
IT'S 2:15 IN THE MORNING. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH HIM, JEROME?
YEAH - YOU HEARD ME! DUMP ALL THE TRASH OUT OF THAT KEEP-THE-CITY-CLEAN BOX.
KEEP THE CITY CLEAN
NOW, BOYS, IF YOU'LL ALL TAKE HOLD.

5-4-40

DICK TRACY
WELL, WE BEAT HIM TO IT, TRACY.
YEAH?
HM?? THERE'S SOMETHING FUNNY 'HERE. HE SNAPPED THAT GUN TWICE.
LOOK! TRY TO FIGURE THIS ONE OUT! THAT GUN WASN'T EVEN LOADED! NOT ONE BULLET IN IT.
AHA HA, HAW, HAW, HA, HA HA!

4-25-40

BUT, LADY, THIS IS A MILK TRUCK.
DRIVE AROUND TO THE REAR ENTRANCE OF THAT APARTMENT, IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU.
MILK
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS? LOOK AT MY WINDOW!
OH! MY HEAD --- MY ARM — OH-H-H-H...
THESE CAROUSERS! COMMON STREET BRAWLERS!
PO-LICE! POLICE!

5-11-40

In the second panel of the 5/14/40 daily we see a fine example of Gould's skill. All the objects are beautifully drawn, skillfully arranged in a pleasing composition dominated by three planes and three vertical lines. The general effect is cool and rational. This combines with Tracy's relaxed pose to give a satisfying feeling of completeness.

Gould shows that he also can draw beautiful proportions when he wants to. Panel three of the 5/4/40 daily shows a car that is perfectly drawn, nothing clumsy or awkward. The Chester Gould who spent painstaking hours rendering the products of newspaper advertisers really knew his business. You can't knock his draftsmanship.

The emotional effect of the art in this panel combines harsh irony with black humor. The trash bin is designed to suggest a coffin, replete with pall bearer handles, into which the unconscious Tracy will be dumped. The minor civic virtue of its "Keep The City Clean" sign is being twisted malevolently by a criminal mind that treats Tracy as nothing more than worthless human debris. The artwork here is stark and severe, composed of alternating areas of sharply defined black and white surfaces drawn in rigid rectilinear perspective.

Looking at dailies 4/25/40 and 5/11/40, we find the same kind of effect. The panels dominated by background are usually harsh and austere. The reason becomes apparent. The supposedly representational backgrounds are highly abstract, composed of planes containing well-defined squares and rectangles.

Once again Gould has confounded convention. He has completely reversed the patterns that other artists fall into naturally. Not only does he use two distinct styles simultaneously, he also imbues these styles with idiosyncratic elements that make them wholly different from anyone else's. His art is unique, difficult to comprehend. That is why so many condemn it and fail to appreciate it.

When people call Gould a crude and clumsy artist they are probably referring to something like what we see in the 4/23/40 daily. In these panels the policemen's hands are out of proportion. Also the large size of the hands emphasize the fact that they are drawn in a manner which does not display any knowledge of underlying anatomy. One might say the hands look as if they were drawn by a child.

However, I do not see anything crude about it. It is my feeling that Gould instinctively drew the hands too large for effect. Their size better expresses the helpless surrender of the policemen, just as the round and overly large eyes of the first policeman express more strongly his fear and amazement. I would not criticize the distorted shape of a table in a painting by Matisse. I know Matisse does this for the sake of composition. Thus I will not criticize an element of Gould's drawing which, considered by itself, might seem wrong. It is right when considered within Gould's scheme of things.

Notice the pattern of this particular strip. There is a gradual swing of the focus of attention from left to right. Nothing could have more dramatically and effectively expressed the nature of the dual drama taking place. This movement foreshadows what we will later learn. Doolb (yes, "blood" spelled backwards) the man in the cell, is unimportant. Jerome Trohs, the midget on the dog, is the real menace and also the new boss of Doolb's gang. Doolb's escape attempt may represent a dramatic challenge, but the real drama is the rise of Jerome Trohs. Thus our focus of attention moves form Doolb to Trohs just as the doomed Doolb is eclipsed by the ruthless Trohs.

Gould's narrative is no less sophisticated than his drawing. The story is characterized by a series of explosive personality clashes that lead inevitably to the murder of Jerome Trohs. The characters are constantly approaching each other, usually with one party unaware of the danger involved. When they meet there is a sudden and violent clash.

Trohs is challenged by the gang members who think the midget is too weak to run the gang. Mamma beats them into submission. Tracy approaches someone he assumes to be a mere traffic offender. He ends up being kidnapped and tortured. Junior's dog sniffs noses with Trohs' dog. It is nearly killed by the larger animal. The pet store owner tries to save Junior's dog. Mamma promptly punches him out.

It does not take long to notice there is a dominant motif running through the narrative. If you had to use one word to describe the motif it would be "imbalance." There is something grotesque in the relationships between characters. Mamma playing Gargantua to the tiny Trohs is the best example. She and Trohs make a bizarre pair. Intimacy between them is inconceivable. It is not possible to explain the attraction each has for the other. Yet, for all this, their relationship is credible. We have all seen odd couples. We recognize the attraction of opposites. We are aware of the perverse relationships that sometimes develop between people.

JEROME, DEAR! DID EVERYTHING TURN OUT ALL RIGHT?
SHUT UP! I'LL TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT WHEN I GET MY THINGS OFF. WHERE ARE MY SLIPPERS? -AND GET ME A GLASS OF BEER.

Imbalance also exists within the characters. Jerome Trohs is a man driven by ambition. He is a young Napoleon fighting his way to the top of the world. Yet, his tiny body cannot begin to contain his mountainous ego. The man and the dream do not match. It seems something is out of place, something will have to give.

Mamma is also unbalanced. Her ravenous appetite controls who she is and what she does. It has turned her into a monster. It drives her relentlessly. Her desire for revenge seems only a part of her compulsions. She is able to resist this desire no more than she is able to resist her chocolates. It drives her on a journey of vengeance and destroys her as surely as it destroys Trohs.

Story and art dovetail into a single, whole expression. As it turns out, recognizing the two styles of drawing is really the key to understanding this strip. The imbalance in the

I SAID STICK 'EM UP! ALL OF YOU!
WHAT IN-?
HAND ME THAT RING OF KEYS.
ATTA BOY. JUST KEEP 'EM UP, GENTS!
WHERE DID HE GET THE GUN?
HEY! STOP THAT MIDGET.
STEP ON IT, TIP! WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE.

4-23-40

characters is also in the art. The cartoony characters do not belong in the realistic/abstract world they inhabit. Their curvilinear, exaggerated features do not fit into a world of austere, rectilinear cityscapes. This causes a tension between characters and environment. It bathes the whole story in an atmosphere of conflict created by irreconcilable differences. It gives the story an underlying tension that constantly works on the characters, making their tenuous relationships even more difficult. Thus the discordance in the art not only reflects, but also creates the discordance found within the characters, between the characters, and between the characters and the world.

Gould is doing a risky thing employing two presumably incompatible styles of art. Others, like Jose Gonzales in James Warren's comic magazines, have done this too and have failed. Yet Gould pulls it off because his idea is disciplined and carefully related to a larger vision. Gonzales uses different levels of style in *Vampirella*. In one panel he will be a cartoonist, and in the next an illustrator. In one panel he will distill reality into a few basic lines and in the next he will attempt realism of painstaking detail. However, Gonzales never understood the importance of having a reason for what he draws and the way he draws it.

As the film director Jean Luc Godard once said, "A tracking shot is a moral statement." Only a few artists ever come to understand the lesson contained in those words. Even fewer ever put it into practice. Gould is one of those very few, intuitively adopting that concept long before Godard's pretentiously worded philosophy on the nature of filmic tracking shots. An idea is there. Gould's own techniques create the tensions in the world his characters inhabit. They do not simply reflect those tensions. That's why the use of a technique like rectilinear perspective in his work is a moral statement. It says something about man and his relationship to his world.

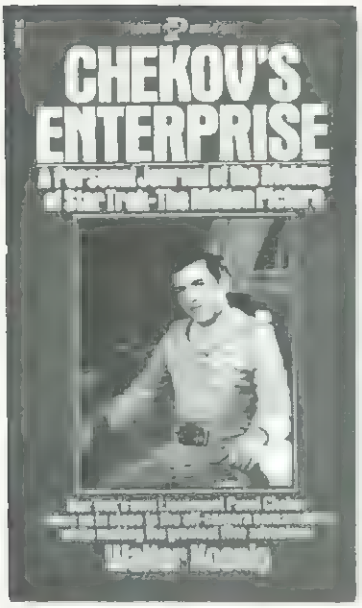
Gould's art is good because he understands his medium and his art is great because he puts all of himself into this understanding. We see the rational side of Gould in background drawings. They represent the part of his character that is built on reason, learning and morality. But Gould goes farther than this. Through his caricatures he gives expression to the deeper and darker impulses within that are in contrast to the loftier part of our souls.

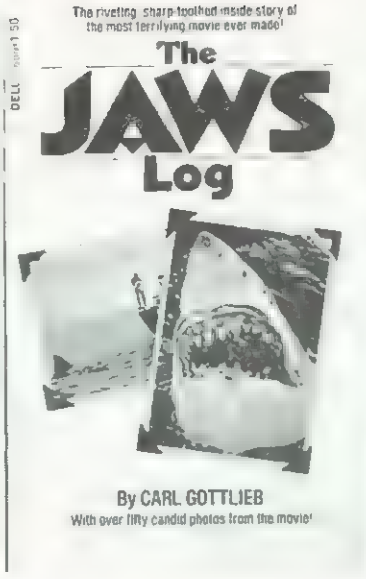
Gould shows that he is not just another art class graduate, an advertisement illustrator for the Chicago Tribune. He is also a seven year old Oklahoma boy drawing caricatures of people he has seen. And he is an instinctive artist whose feelings are transmitted freely to paper without the interference of learning or reason. He is not simply a middle class citizen demanding law and order, he is a man who understands the laws of life that govern the laws of men.

Dick Tracy is about good guys fighting bad guys, and about the larger fight that all men face. That is why some call the strip tragic. Jerome Trohs is doomed by himself as are many other foes of Tracy. Even Tracy is not in control. He often is forced to take a back seat to the larger dramas of man versus nature or man versus himself. He, like the reader, becomes a spectator as the desperate criminal plays out his rope until he hangs himself with it. Tracy is often incapacitated as the futile gestures of rebellion consume the thread of a criminal's life.

From this perspective, Dick Tracy and the ugliness and violence of criminals blur. We see their energetic caricatures as expressions of hopelessness and futility that have no effect on an unchanging landscape. The falling show, a recurrent Tracy motif, signals the end of the plans of many a criminal and the triumph of the more inscrutible scheme of nature. When a criminal comes to his end, confined in some ghastly trap or caught in some dread hole, we are no longer impressed with his dynamism. Tracy, too, is a part of this plan. He stops many a career in crime, but his efforts are often subordinated to a larger power.

It is that awareness of a larger power that impresses me most about Gould's comic strip. Gould is a believer in the hero, but he is not narrow-minded about it. He shows us that there is a province in the world of man that is not governed by man. □

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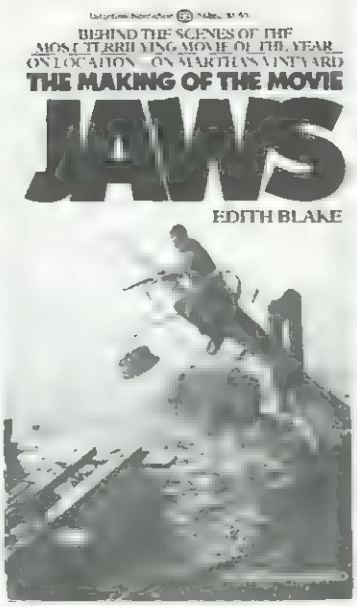
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ON LOCATION ON MARTHA'S VINEYARD
THE MAKING OF THE MOVIE
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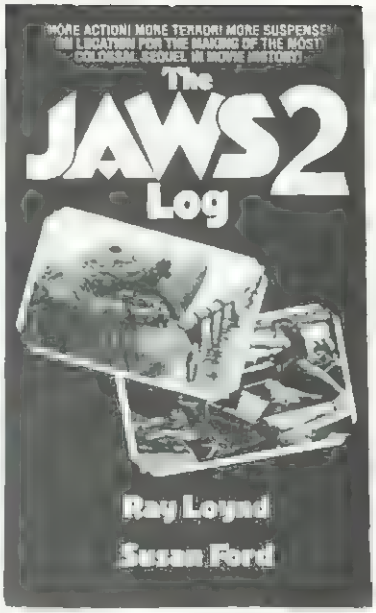
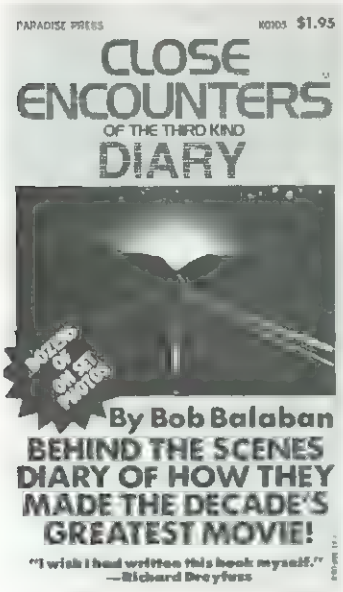
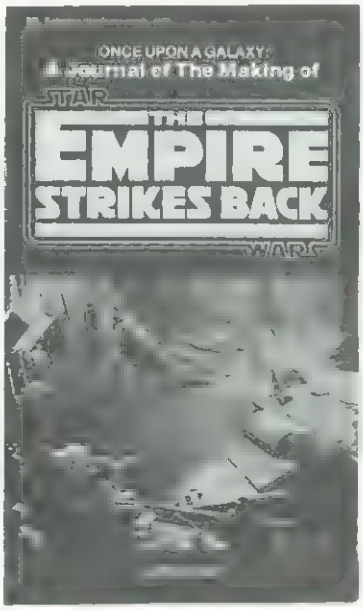
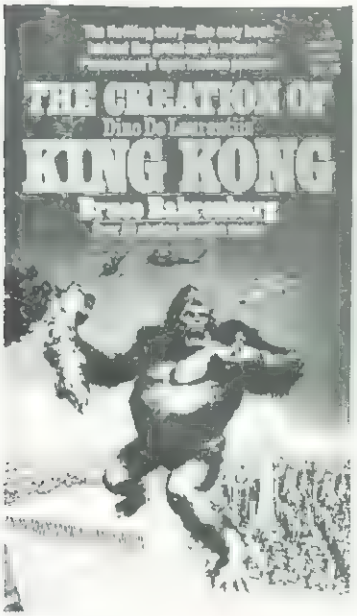


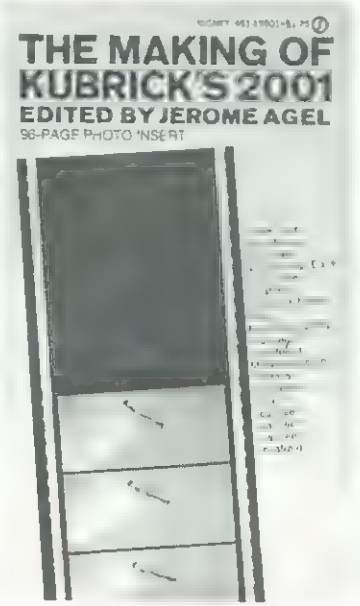


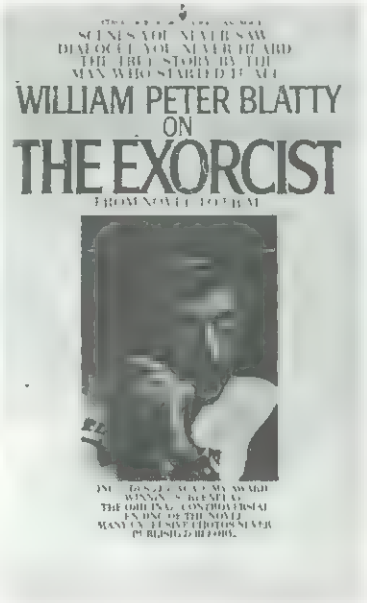


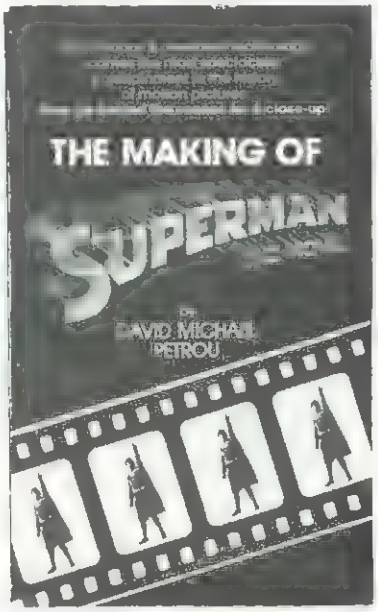
THE MAKING OF MAKING OF BOOKS

BY DALE LUCIANO





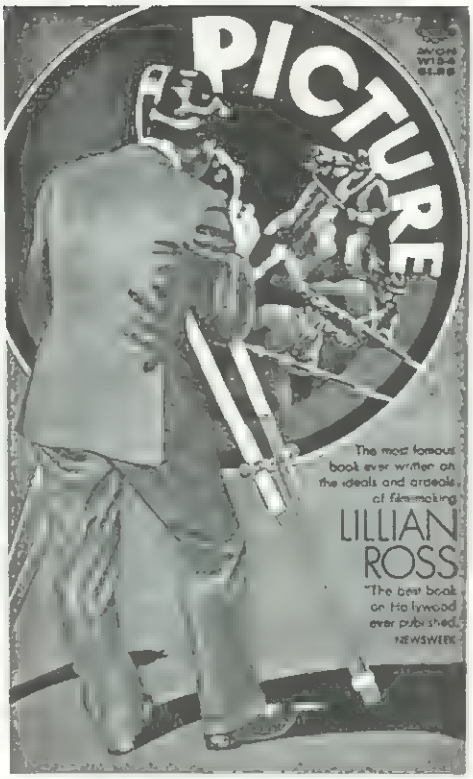




Beyond creation lies the urge to record and document the process of creation. Journals, diaries and logbooks have been written and published on everything from cartooning *(R. Crumb Sketchbook)* to fine arts (Claes Oldenburg's *Notes In Hand)* to novel writing (John Steinbeck's *Journal of a Novel: The East of Eden Letters)* to mounting a major Broadway production (William Gibson's *The Seesaw Log)* to television scripting (Harlan Ellison's *The Glass Teat* and *Only You, Dick Daring!* by Merle Miller and Evan Rhodes) to TV watching (an hour-by-hour account of a full TV week in Charles Sopkin's *Seven Glorious Days, Seven Fun-Filled Nights).* The past dozen years or so have witnessed the ongoing evolution of lavishly budgeted, blockbuster science fiction, horror and adventure films as major Hollywood efforts. Inevitably following in the wakes of such superproductions as *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), *The Exorcist* (1973), *Jaws* (1975), *King Kong* (1976), *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977), *Superman The Movie* (1978), *Star Trek–The Motion Picture* (1979), and *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) have been first-person, "this-is-how-it-was-made" accounts of each film's shooting. It's a peculiar, hard-to-define literary form. Since moviemaking is a disjointed, time-consuming and tedious enterprise, it's hardly surprising that these production journals (invariably entitled *The Making of* —) often tend to be as episodic, erratic and tedious as their subjects.

Absent from most accounts is genuine insight into the creative decision-making process, since the major shaping of concept and script is normally completed before shooting commences or, in the case of a problematic production like *Star Trek–The Motion Picture,* the author is either not privy to creative decisions being made during the film's shooting or isn't talking. In the case of the contemporary science fiction film, ordinary processes of filmmaking are further complicated by mind-boggling technical problems involved in producing special effects; none but a few key personnel have much of an awareness of the totality, so written accounts often have even less immediacy and significance than might be ideal.

Missing as well from quite a few of these film journals is a distinctive, evaluative point of view on the part of the writer, the kind of


PICTURE
The most famous book ever written on the ideals and ordeals of filmmaking
LILLIAN ROSS
"The best book on Hollywood ever published."
NEWSWEEK

critical faculty at work in Lillian Ross's pioneering 1952 book *Picture* (on the making of John Huston's 1951 *The Red Badge of Courage)* or Pauline Kael's incisive essay on the making of *The Group* (1966). Granted, Ross had a memorable subject in documenting MGM's trashing of Huston's film of Stephen Crane's classic novel, and she took it all in–from the internal corporate rivalries that doomed the film almost from the start and compromises that diluted the original concept, to the film's playing to empty houses in its premiere New York engagement. Kael similarly observed the making of a film that might have emerged as an important American work, illuminating how and why an ambitious project envolved into a mediocre finished product. Still, most movie journal authors are content to record, with little or no comment, the surface of events as best they were able to discern them.

Eleanor Coppola's *Notes* (Simon & Schuster, 1979) does not presume to be a journal on the making of *Apocalypse Now!* Yet the book gets at what many of these journals miss: in its glimpses of an anguished Francis Ford Coppola trying to pull his artistically ambitious Vietnam epic together, it has a sense of the debilitating agony/ecstasy of the creative process. In writing about the making of *Jaws, King Kong* or *The Empire Strikes Back,* the author is more likely to provide us with a portrait of a corporate undertaking in which careers and vast sums of money are at stake and artistry is implicitly subordinated to corporate expediency. Unfortunately, the writer often searches out what's most commonplace and least provocative about making a movie —the technical problems, the logistical complications, the slowness of the process—and overlooks the human factors of talent, personality and motivation that ultimately have more to do with the finished product than any other element. (One exception, John Gregory Dunne's *The Studio* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1969) provides an illuminating account of the corporate personalities at Twentieth Century-Fox responsible for several major releases, including the ill-fated, $18 million *Dr. Doolittle.)*

Yet I enjoy reading most of these books, and choose to regard them as dispatches from the front lines. If none are written with the scholarly persistence of Orville Goldner and George E. Turner's *The Making of King Kong* (Ballantine, 1976) or the production retrospectives in Frederick Clarke's film periodical *Cinefantastique,* they are partially redeemed by having been written amid the frenetic, backbreaking activity of getting the thing made. They are primary source documents that may be of interest to critics and historians in years to come. Ironically, since most are paperback originals, once they are out-of-print (sometimes in a matter of months), they become hard-to-find rarities, missing from most library shelves.

Jerome Agel's *The Making of Kubrick's 2001* (Signet, 1970) is a scattershot, after-the -fact attempt to assemble information about the film's production and the mixed public response to 2001's non-verbal, anti-linear storytelling. The McLuhan-influenced result is that of a scrapbook, obsessively collected but minus contents page or index. As a historical document, it's not terribly

Close Encounters of the Third Kind

Francois and I go over to talk to one of the little girls. As we talk to her, she slowly rises a few feet off the ground. We hadn't noticed the wire attached to her waist; Francois is enchanted. We look around and see seven or eight more little ETs bouncing around five, ten, even twenty feet up in the air. It's magical. One little girl hangs motionless, high above us, while a technician adjusts her pulley. She notices us watching and starts to flap her arms. The unruly kids of three weeks ago are now acting calmer and more professionally than the rest of us.

After much rehearsal and positioning, the ETs are loaded into the Mothership which slowly rises about fifteen feet. The heat building up inside the ship is tremendous, and Spielberg says we must hurry and film or the kids will get baked. He yells "action" and four cameras begin to roll simultaneously. The spaceship sinks slowly to the ground. The bottom slides open. A blinding light streams out of the ship, enveloping us as we stand transfixed. A large ramp appears in the sulphurous fog and spindly ETs start tentatively crawling out of the ship, gliding and rolling down the ramp with bridges the concrete Wyoming landing strip with another universe. Suddenly, nine or ten ETs fly out of the ship, twirl around, wave their arms and swoop over our heads. One or two hover near the ship, turning endless somersaults. Mimes dressed as technicians move about the ETs in slow motion. A creature comes forward, haltingly. Then it breaks into a disco hustle. "Cut," yells Spielberg, to the rubber-suited children. "ETs, stop fooling around!"

The Mothership has landed.

Bob Balaban, from
Close Encounters of the Third Kind Diary

helpful in clarifying the basis on which Kubrick made certain artistic choices, but since Kubrick insists that *2001* speak for itself, the occasional ambiguity of the director's aspirations cannot be pinned to Agel. The book reprints Arthur C. Clarke's 1948 short story "The Sentinel," a variety of provacative reviews, and *Playboy*'s interview with Kubrick--certainly the most extensive Kubrick has granted--and contains a generous array of production stills and *2001* memorabilia. As a casebook, it's useful as a compilation of critical material, both pro and con. It's filled to the brim with so many *2001* facts, quotes, miscellanea and arcana that one can hardly find the credit line for Agel's assistant Ed Rosenfeld, who later became *Omni*'s articles editor.

A complement to Agel's book is Arthur C. Clarke's *The Lost Worlds of 2001: The Ultimate Log of the Ultimate Trip* (Signet, 1972), which includes Clarke's own memories of the creative collaboration and previously unpublished drafts of the *2001* novel, written at Kubrick's request as preamble to ironing out the final screenplay. As background to the most influential of contemporary science fiction films, Clarke's is a contemplative, revealing view of his collaboration with Kubrick.

In terms of comprehensive information, *William Peter Blatty on The Exorcist from Novel to Film* (Bantam, 1974) is among the more informative of these books. It contains both Blatty's original, first-draft screenplay and a "Transcript with Scene Settings" of the finished film. The contrast between the two offers considerable insight into the evolution of a difficult project from its inception as a screenplay to its final incarnation as a film. Blatty lucidly accounts for the many shifts in focus and emphasis from the early draft, as a result of disagreements with director William Friedkin, the need for clarity and compression in storytelling, and his own rethinking of the novel's implications as production continued. Intriguing in the original draft version are the expository exchanges between Karras and the possessing demon, as well as a scene between Karras and Merrin in which Blatty's theme--the problem of belief in goodness, in the face of such horrifying evil--is clarified. If you've ever wondered why Kinderman, the Columbo-like detective played by the late Lee J. Cobb, is mysteriously absent from the film's second half, or why *The Exorcist*'s prologue in Iraq seems only vaguely related to the story's subsequent developments in Georgetown, the explanations are here. As a document on the making, it's extremely revealing of both Blatty's and Friedkin's distinctive contributions.

Blatty's 375-page book contains only 52 pages of memoir material by Blatty, almost all of it focusing on his work on both the novel and the scripting. To follow *The Exorcist*'s 224 days of principal photography, one must seek out Howard Newman's *The Exorcist: The Strange Story Behind the Film* (Pinnacle Books, 1974). Purportedly an accounting of the "thirteen fatal or near-fatal events" attributed to "diabolic intervention" during filming, Newman quickly dispenses with the supernatural in favor of a comprehensive *Exorcist* coverage, beginning with the appearance of the front-page story in the August 26, 1949 *Washington Post* that inspired Blatty and carrying the reader through the entire year of film production. Along the way he reveals the actual facts surrounding the two deaths, the two commitments to mental institutions, the fire, flood, near-execution and other accidents that occurred during filming. For a first-person account of Mercedes McCambridge's recording of the demon voice, the reader with a strong stomach is advised to read her autobiography, *The Quality of Mercy* (Times Books, 1981). There's also a full chapter in Wilson Bryan Key's dubious *Media Sexploitation* (Prentice-Hall, 1976) that gives an accounting of the film's use of sound/image subliminals.

Barbara Pallenberg's *The Making of Exorcist II: The Heretic* (Warner, 1977) records the making of the sequel, recently elected "First Runner Up" in the "Worst Film of All Time" poll conducted by the brothers Medved for their *Golden Turkey Awards* Book. The $14 million *Exorcist II* is a rather startling artistic mess, but director John Boorman is an exceptionally able director, and there should have been a great subject in how the maker of *Point Blank* (1967), *Deliverance* (1972) and *Excalibur* (1981) could so lavishly misuse his talents. Written to an early deadline, the book includes no mention of the film's catastrophic national reception or the reaction of the cast and director to the film's artistic and financial failure. (Warner Brothers went so far as to devise a new ending, since audiences in some cities laughed uproariously at the original conclusion; the revised coda reportedly did not fare much better.) The book is written with the upbeat tone of a sympathetic observer trying to make evryone look good. Reading between the lines, though, one can discern the portrait of a remarkably intelligent director getting further and further lost as he proceeds with a hopelessly ponderous, pretentious script.

Michael Crichton's *Westworld* (Bantam, 1974) contains the finished screenplay and Crichton's own account of preparing and shooting at MGM, where Crichton knew there existed a history of "unreasonable pressure, arbitrary script changes, inadequate post-production, and cavalier recutting of the final film." All of these but the last--Crichton "camera-cut" the film in shooting, thus minimizing available footage--plagued the novice director. The horror story of his treatment at the hands of MGM executives is a case study in corporate abuse of the popular artist. That *Westworld* turned out to be an entertaining and imaginative film, in spite of evident budget restrictions, seems little short of miraculous. The tone of the writing is understandable bitterness, though Crichton takes pride in the success of the final result.

There are two accounts of the making of Steven Spielberg's *Jaws*. Carl Gottlieb's *The Jaws Log* (Dell, 1975) is marginally the better of the two. Co-author of the screenplay with Peter Benchley, Gottlieb has a better sense of the creative talents involved and the kind of movie that producers Richard Zanuck and David Brown hoped to make. Gottlieb, who spent most of the production occupied with script rewrites, might have done better to write more on his own contribution to the final film; his point of view toward the project is blandly reportorial and surprisingly remote. Edith Blake's *On Location On Martha's Vineyard (The Making of the Movie Jaws* (Ballantine, 1975) is more anecdotal--where else might one learn that the effect of bullets striking water were prduced by Spielberg tossing marbles into the ocean?--an entertaining account of production mired in mechanical difficulties and apparently regarded with immense disdain by the Martha's Vineyard community. Neither book, though, offers much insight into the moviemaking skill that characterizes Spielberg's *Jaws* or the director's subsequent efforts.

Ray Loynd's *The Jaws 2 Log* (Dell, 1978) holds less interest, largely because *Jaws 2* holds less interest. There is, however, a sketchy but readable account of the firing of director John Hancock (*Bang The Drum Slowly)* and his replacement by Jeannot Szwarc. Loynd's profile of Szwarc suggests the French-born director of *Bug* (1975) and *Somewhere In Time* (1980) may be heard from more decisively in the future. As to the

The Exorcist

The solution to the filming of the masturbation scene suddenly hit Friedkin one day when he remembered the telephone conversation with the aunt of the original fourteen-year-old boy who was the prototype for the movie. He and Blatty went into a huddle and came up with the idea which not only made the scene more acceptable but even more dramatic than originally depicted in the book. The boy's aunt had described the self-propelling table which barred her retreat from the room. She had told of the bowl of flowers which crashed to the ground and other incredible kinetic phenomena.

Subsequently, in rewriting the difficult episode for the screen, the men filmed not only the nefarious activity with the crucifix, but backed it with a simultaneous mind-boggling display of flying crockery, books and lamps, smashing against the walls; sliding furniture with hinged doors flapping open and shut, and a whole phantasmagoria of bewildering things. . . only *one* of which was the leering, snarling, demon-wracked child in her torn, bloody nightgown screaming blasphemies and committing the unspeakable act . . . The audience does not miss the stomach-churning deed, but it has little time to dwell on it. The scene becomes almost subliminal in its effect, a part of a mosaic of horror.

--Howard Newman
The Exorcist: The Strange Story Behind the Film

difference between Spielberg's film and the sequel, actress Lorraine Garry has the final word: "Making the frist *Jaws* was like a day at camp when camp was fun. To Steven Spielberg, film was a wonderful toy... *Jaws 2* is different–it's being made by grown-ups."

Considering the potential humor in the subject, Bruce Bahrenburg's *The Creation of Dino De Laurentiis' King Kong* (Pocket Book, 1976) is fairly low-key. Depiction of De Laurentiis is amusing but respectful, and Bahrenburg's record of the gargantuan production leaves one feeling admiration for director John Guillermin's struggle to leave some kind of personal imprint on the film. The scale of *Kong* tells a classic tale of Hollywood excess. It's difficult to read about construction of the forty-foot mechanical Kong or the $800,000 wall on MGM's backlot in Culver City and not be struck by the bloated surrealism of the undertaking. D.W. Griffith's City of Babylon in *Intolerance* (1916) comes to mind as a comparable symbol of Hollywood extravagance, but De Laurentiis is no Griffith and *King Kong* is no pioneering work of film imagination. If Bahrenburg's book turns into a study of the corporate genius behind blockbuster marketing techniques--*Kong* was pre-sold at a handsome profit before anyone had a chance to see it--it also suggests that the finished film was much better than it had any right to be. In Bahrenburg's telling, Guillermin, not the ubiquitous De Laurentiis, is largely responsible.

Bob Balaban's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind Diary* (Paradise Press, 1978) has the advantage of being written by one of the key supporting actors, (Balaban plays Francois Truffaut's interpreter.) He writes with a self-effacing sense of humor, and his awestruck account of working with Truffaut is ingratiating. The book offers without apology an actor's limited insight into the scope of over-all production, and it communicates a vivid sense of being part of an endeavor which most of the participants sensed would be extraordinary. (Here one finds a much better understanding of Spielberg's gifts as a director than in either of the *Jaws* books.) Of all the production journals, Balaban's is the most likable because it's personably written on an endearingly human scale.

David Michael Petrou's *The Making of Superman The Movie* (Warner, 1978) is a straightforward account, with predictable profiles of producers Alexander and Ilya Salkind, director Richard Donner, and Christopher Reeve. Petrou is content to let participants speak for themselves--the brief interview with Marlon Brando is a good one--but the book would have been substantially strengthened by a more evaluative point of view. Problems with tone and direction of the script are covered, for example, but only in very general terms. The last-minute importation of Richard Lester to supervise the film's completion goes virtually unmentioned. Also missing is any indication of the ferocious wrangling which would later take place between Warner and the Salkinds over final delivery of the film. It's a passable account, but it never occurs to Petrou to consider the question of how (or whether) the innocence of the Superman myth survived the onslaught of this vast, corporate juggernaut.

The Making of Star Trek-The MotionPicture by Susan Sackett and Gene Roddenberry (Wallaby, 1980) is a bland effort aimed squarely at the Trekkie market. The writing is bloodless, schoolteacher's prose ("Bob was born September 10, 1914 in Winchester, Indiana, the son of a meat packer. As a youngster, he became a movie fan..."), and very little insight into production difficulties is offered. Sackett notes that the script was incomplete as shooting commenced, for example, but provides no account of how the finalized script and plotline ultimately took shape. The multi-million dollar fiasco involving Abel and Associates' botching of the special effects is glossed over in a few sentences. As in the earlier *The Making of Star Trek* (Del Rey, 1968) by Stephen E. Whitfield and Roddenberry, a variety of inter-office memos and directives are reproduced in their entirety. These are legitimate inclusions as historical documents, but they make for ponderous reading.

Walter Koenig's *Chekov's Enterprise: A Personal Journal of the Making of Star Trek--The Motion Picture* is a more personalized account (Pocket Books, 1980). Like Bob Balaban's book on *Close Encounters*, Koenig's has the bemused, bewildered and frequently disoriented tone of an actor lost in the middle of a vast corporate undertaking. If I read correctly between the lines, Koenig is skeptical about the whole process of shooting this grossly inflated, $30 million epic. (He's delighted to be working, however.) Also like Balaban, Koenig keeps everything on a human scale--revealing that during shooting, for example, he can find no one on the set able to explain a "worm hole" distortion from a physics point of view. This is a good-natured diary of the proceedings.

Alan Arnold's *Once Upon A Galaxy: A Journal of The Making of The Empire Strikes Back* (Del Rey, 1980) is among the best of these first-person accounts. Unit publicist on *Empire,* Arnold has a level-headed, businesslike attitude toward the movie industry; he's more interested in the personalities and ideas of the filmmakers than in any alleged "magic" of filmmaking itself. (The technical wizardry frankly baffles him; at one point, he confesses his complete inability to make sense of *American Cinematographer*'s account of how *Star Wars* was filmed.) The book has a series of interviews with all key production personnel, who are allowed to speak intelligently--and most important, *uninterrupted*--about their craft. There's a chapter which transcribes director Irvin Kershner's seemingly tireless efforts to control the elaborate chaos surrounding the shooting of Han Solo's consignment to the carbon-freezing chamber. Arnold documents it all, from Carrie Fisher's edgy anger at Kershner for having worked with Harrison Ford on last-minute script changes without consulting her, to Dave Prowse's cheerful, "not entirely welcome" arrival on the beleaguered set with his newly published book, *Fitness is Fun.* It's a funny, wonderful picture of big-budget moviemaking at its most absurd. Arnold provides sensitively drawn profiles of creative personalities, especially Fisher and Kershner. Both George Lucas and Gary Kurtz emerge as sensible, dedicated businessmen/moviemakers who feel a sense of responsibility about quality of finished product. By Arnold's account, the degree of Lucas and Kurtz's support for Kershner's promethean labors is without parallel in contemporary Hollywood. One can see, for example, why a Steven Spielberg would jump at the chance to work with Lucas on *Raiders of the Lost Ark.*

Star Trek—The Motion Picture

TUESDAY, AUGUST 22

2:20 p.m.: All things come to those who wait. The camera at last and my immortal lines: "Photon torpedoes armed. . . targeting asteroid. . . torpedoes away."

This first angle is a master shot past Decker and Chekov (he has rushed to the Russian's side to belay Kirk's order for phasers) and encompassing most of the bridge. In order to get it they have had to take out the wall behind my console and shoot into the bridge from offstage. . .

2:55 p.m.: We continue to rehearse... At this point in the plot the asteroid has been pulled into the wormhole with us and we are on a collision course. At the same time we are being sucked deeper and deeper into the vortex. The deeper we are driven, the more we jiggle, bump, shake, rattle, and roll. While this is happening, I am trying to reach the button to fire the torpedo to destroy the asteroid. Since all the bouncing around is self-induced, I am expending considerable energy pushing myself away from the panel while straining with the rest of my strength to reach it. It's sort of like an isometric exercise, the kind you're supposed to do for thirty seconds at a time. It's now been thirty-five minutes.

6:30 p.m.: We finally get the master shot and then set up for another angle of the same business. We do it again and againand again and then shoot still another setup of this sequence. In all, I work four hours and ten minutes trying to fire the bloody torpedoes. The lights are intensely hot and I'm drenched and exhausted. We'll do it all over again tomorrow, probably most of the day. My screen time for this scene in the finished picture may be four or five seconds long. But you know what? - I love every second of the fifteen thousand we've spent on it so far.

An actor is an actor is an actor, indeed. --Walter Koenig,
from *Chekov's Enterprise: A Personal Journal of the Making of Star Trek -- The Motion Picture*

As a collection, these journals offer glimpses into the making of films that have wielded enormous influence on popular culture as a whole in the past decade. There are several expensively produced, additional sources--supporting documents and not production journals as such--certain to be of interest to admirers and students of these films in years to come. Carol Titelman's *The Art of Star Wars* (Ballantine, 1979) reprints the film's complete script, generously interspersed with sketches and production paintings; there's also an entertaining collection of posters, cartoons, comic book covers, strips and childrens' drawings included as testimony to the film's commercial and cultural impact. Companion pieces to this are Vic Bulluck and Valerie Hoffman's *Art of The Empire Strikes Back* (Ballantine, 1980), which contains hundreds of illustrations and designs used in producing the film, and *The Empire Strikes Back Notebook* (Ballantine, 1980) which includes an annotated version of the complete shooting script and hundreds of storyboard illustrations. Thomas Durwood's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind: A Document of the Film* (Ariel, 1978) is a handsome, profusely illustrated assemblage of words images that comprise a deluxe souvenir program. (It's bound to become a collector's item, since it includes several stills of scenes missing from the re-edited *Special Edition* of the film.) Included is an introduction by Ray Bradbury--who terms the film "in all probability, the most important film of our time"--and an epilogue by Carl Sagan. Paul Scanlon and Michael Gross's *The Book of Alien* (Heavy Metal, 1979) is a collection of original sketches, paintings and production stills; the supporting text is minimal but well-written.

Along with the painstakingly assembled production histories that appear in *Cinefantastique, American Cinematographer* has published extensive (but sometimes technically indecipherable to the layman) coverage of the making of *Star Wars* (7/77), *Close Encounters* (1/78), *The Black Hole* (1/80), and *Clash of the Titans* (7/81). In addition, fan-oriented periodicals--*Fangoria, Fantastic Films, Future Life,* Steranko's *Mediascene Prevue, Questar,* and *Starlog*--offer generalized but occasionally exclusive coverage of new release and past classics.

So many *Making of*— books have apeared during the past decade that this article does not presume to be all-inclusive. Among the more recent entries is Bridget Terry's *The Popeye Story* (Dell, 1980) on Robert Altman's film of E. C. Segar's strip. Past titles include the bizarre Terry Southern/William Claxton collaboration, *The Journal of The Loved One: The Production Log of a Motion Picture* (Random House, 1965), C. Kirk McClelland's informative *On Making A Movie: Brewster McCloud* (Signet, 1971), and Ira Zuckerman's skimpy *The Godfather Journal* (Manor Books, 1972). Perhaps more memorably written than any of these are a select number of production "reconstructions," including the Goldner and Turner *King Kong* book, Pauline Kael's *The Citizen Kane Book* (Bantam, 1971), which includes the original shooting script, "an RKO Cutting Continuity," and the famed essay, "Raising Kane;" and Aljean Harmetz's *The Making of The Wizard of Oz* (Knopf, 1977).

The film production journal is a familiar if bastardized form, destined to appear at regular intervals in the years to come. For the fan interested in a "behind the scenes" look at a number of the most popular and influential contemporary films, these journals and postmortem compendiums perhaps fill a need to scrutinize and understand the object of one's admiration and fascination. I'd be hard-pressed to build much of a case for most of these accounts as literature or, for that matter, journalism. Still, when one has been entertained, thrilled, moved or infuriated by a film, there's a natural desire to want to know more about how the finished product--good, bad or indifferent--came into being. Fragmentary, meandering and monotonous as many of these journals are, those very qualities that make the books unsatisfying as literature provide the most accurate mirror-image of the complex, crazy-quilt way movies are made.

Westworld

An orderly preproduction was impossible. We didn't have our cast until forty-eight hours before shooting began. MGM kept demanding script changes right up to the day of shooting. As we approached that final day, conversations took a more and more hysterical tone, in keeping with the old Hollywood traditions. I remember trying to squelch a casting suggestion by leaning acress somebody's desk and shouting, "I *vomit* whenever I see that actor." At other times I would float through meetings, saying, "You're gonna love it, it's gonna be wonderful, you're gonna love it," and feeling vaguely silly, but that sort of talk seemed to work.

In the final film, almost everything was used more than once. We used one medieval stairway three times, in different places. We used a single underground corridor nine times with six light changes, then tore out a false wall and used the same corridor, now widened, as the robot-repair area. We used one hotel room twice, changing furniture and camera angles. In the case of the hovercraft, we built only half the set (which is symmetrical), but "flopped" half the film left to right in the optical printer, so that the final effect was a full hovercraft compartment. Sometimes these maneuvers forced some peculiar cutting patterns, but the average filmgoer probably never notices this.

--Michael Crichton, from *Westworld*

Harvey Pekar's America

By Jonathan Pearl

You're a man in your mid-thirties and you know what you want out of life (you hope). You've lived through a failed marriage, some lousy jobs, and escaped from the equally lousy places you once lived in. At the age of nineteen, you began writing jazz criticism. Since then you've had articles published in many international music magazines. You do it out of love because the pay is minimal. But you know there's more to life than jazz alone. You've written on such topics as economic history and serious literature, only to find many of the best markets for such material are closed to you. The academicians and big name journalists have the field sewn up already. Fiction writing intrigues you but you know how difficult it is to get it published these days, especially when you live in Cleveland instead of New York. So what do you do?

Readers of **American Splendor** not only know the answer, but will also immediately recognize the above paraphrase of the narrative style used by Harvey Pekar in his story "An Argument at Work." For the rest of you an explanation is in order.

Harvey Pekar, indeed a Cleveland-based freelance journalist, had long thought that the full potentialities of comic books were not being reached by what was found on newsstands and in store racks. He first tried his hand at writing comics in 1972, getting his friends Robert Crumb and Bob Armstrong to illustrate his efforts. Pekar's eye, however, was on something even more ambitious — a comic book of his own.

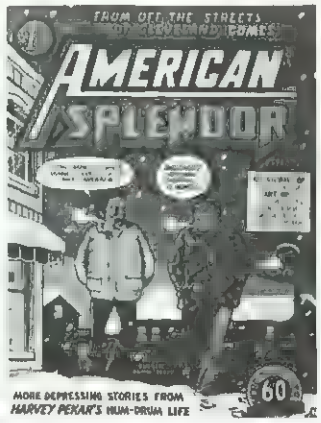
Financing a venture of this sort was naturally a problem. The necessary capital came as the result of Pekar's cold turkey withdrawal from the very real addiction of compulsive record collecting. As prices for out of print jazz 78s and LPs continued to soar, Harvey's earnings from his clerical job in a hospital bought less and less with each new auction list of records he bid on. Once the collector's itch had vanished, he soon had enough money to start work on the first issue of his magazine.

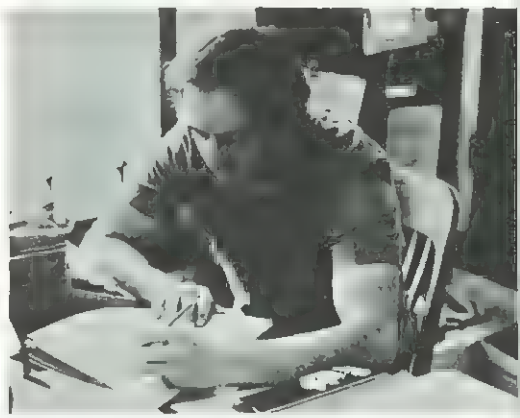
From that first issue of **American Splendor**, a 1976 "Bicentennial Special," one could tell that Pekar was on to something different. How many other comic books have a cover depicting three guys discussing Serbian nationalism? "Am I borin' you guys?" asks Sid, a bearded, pipe-smoking student of life. "No, Sid, yer fascinatin' us," replies Harvey. This is debatable, judging from the vacant stare of Freddy, the good-natured twerp sitting on the curb between Sid and Harvey.

The rest of the issue contains an exaggerated version of Pekar's recruitment of R. Crumb to do artwork, a long story about a cross country love triangle, a look at two blue collar workers shopping in a surreal Cleveland department store (where a woman looking at some records happily declares, "Hey, Zbigniew, here's one by Lil' Wally and Polka Chips."), a superb story set in the year 2010 in which an old man tells two teenagers the truth about the flower power 1960s, and a young man's encounter with a prostitute — a girl he used to play childish games with just ten years earlier.

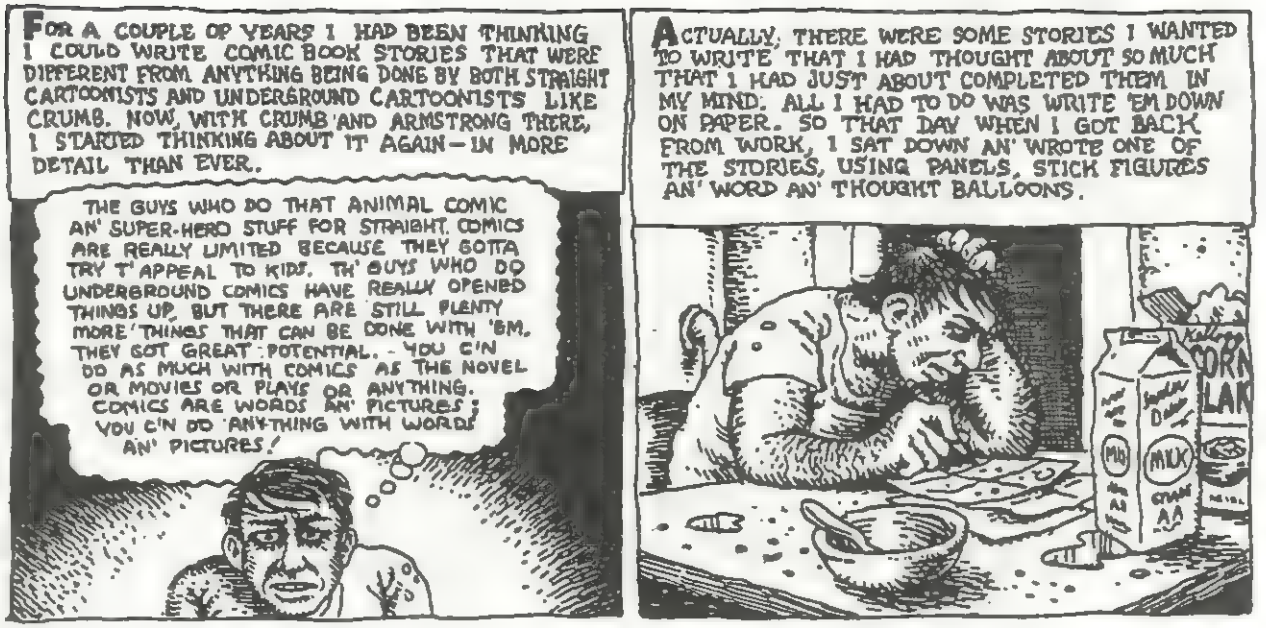
Apart from the Crumb fantasy, which was illustrated by the old left-hander himself, most of the artwork in No. 1 is by Cleveland artists Greg Budgett and Gary Dumm. Pekar still features their work extensively and their skills have developed greatly, losing much of the stiff quality present in their earlier drawings.

American Splendor No. 1 sold out completely. Although more sexually explicit than later issues (all of them contain harsh language), Pekar attributes its sales success to the one-dollar price tag. His subsequent more expensive comics (No. 6 goes for $2.25) have sold steadily, but have not come close to exhausting the initial press

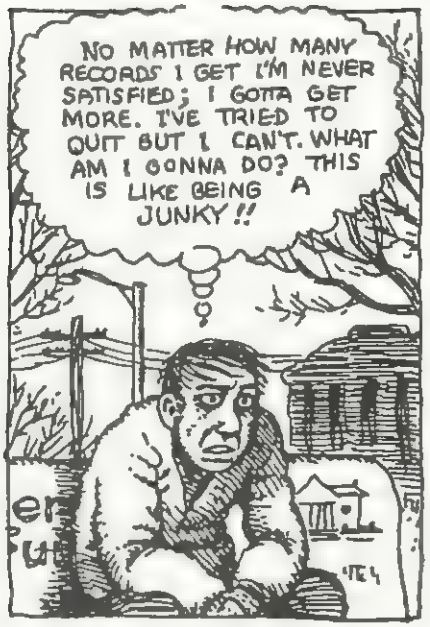




HARVEY PEKAR AT WORK Photo by Gerry Shamray


FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS I HAD BEEN THINKING I COULD WRITE COMIC BOOK STORIES THAT WERE DIFFERENT FROM ANYTHING BEING DONE BY BOTH STRAIGHT CARTOONISTS AND UNDERGROUND CARTOONISTS LIKE CRUMB. NOW, WITH CRUMB AND ARMSTRONG THERE, I STARTED THINKING ABOUT IT AGAIN—IN MORE DETAIL THAN EVER.
THE GUYS WHO DO THAT ANIMAL COMIC AN' SUPER-HERO STUFF FOR STRAIGHT COMICS ARE REALLY LIMITED BECAUSE THEY GOTTA TRY T' APPEAL TO KIDS. TH' GUYS WHO DO UNDERGROUND COMICS HAVE REALLY OPENED THINGS UP, BUT THERE ARE STILL PLENTY MORE THINGS THAT CAN BE DONE WITH 'EM. THEY GOT GREAT POTENTIAL. - YOU C'N DO AS MUCH WITH COMICS AS THE NOVEL OR MOVIES OR PLAYS OR ANYTHING. COMICS ARE WORDS AN' PICTURES; YOU C'N DO ANYTHING WITH WORDS AN' PICTURES!
ACTUALLY, THERE WERE SOME STORIES I WANTED TO WRITE THAT I HAD THOUGHT ABOUT SO MUCH THAT I HAD JUST ABOUT COMPLETED THEM IN MY MIND. ALL I HAD TO DO WAS WRITE 'EM DOWN ON PAPER. SO THAT DAY WHEN I GOT BACK FROM WORK, I SAT DOWN AN' WROTE ONE OF THE STORIES, USING PANELS, STICK FIGURES AN' WORD AN' THOUGHT BALLOONS.

How to stop record collecting in three easy lessons —from "The Young Crumb Story" in *American Splendor* number 4


NO MATTER HOW MANY RECORDS I GET I'M NEVER SATISFIED; I GOTTA GET MORE. I'VE TRIED TO QUIT BUT I CAN'T. WHAT AM I GONNA DO? THIS IS LIKE BEING A JUNKY!!

runs of ten thousand copies each. Pekar believes his largely realistic approach to illustrated stories hampers his sales to traditional comics buyers, who he claims are mainly interested in "fantasy of one kind or another." As a result, **American Splendor** has a varied readership ranging from "street and working class people to academics and lawyers."

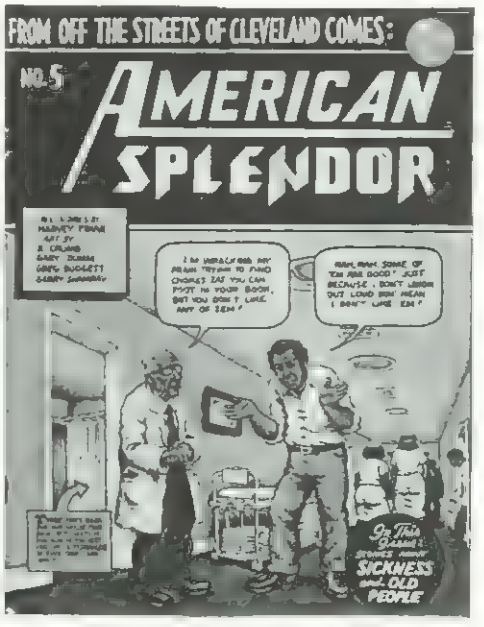
Robert Crumb illustrated several stories found in **Splendor**'s second issue, a big increase in production from his two page contribution to No. 1. Several key Pekar themes appear at length for the first time: hanging out on the street with Sid and Freddy, Harvey's hospital gig and working colleagues, and unrestrained record collecting are all dealt with. "On the Corner July '74" and its sequel "June '76" exemplify the improved graphics of Budgett and Dumm as well as Pekar's sharp ear for dialogue, reflecting his interest in writers Mark Twain, George Ade, and Ring Lardner.

While issue No. 2 had the sub-title "More Depressing Stories From Harvey Pekar's Hum-Drum Life," that designation fits **American Splendor** No. 3 even more clearly. The opening story, illustrated by Crumb, is the self-explanatory "Standing Behind Old Jewish Ladies in Supermarket Lines." To dispel any possible charges of anti-Semitism, a wild-eyed Harvey quickly states that he's "a Yid myself," and that most female members of his family have the same annoying habits as the women in the story. Pekar has no fondness for supermarkets to begin with, for he often writes of working as a teenager in his father's grocery store when it was being squeezed out of existence by competition from A&P and other chains.

Three of Pekar's grimmer stories, "Awaking to the Terror of the New Day," "Awaking to the Terror of the Same Old Day," and "Short Weekend," all concern themselves in showing how a newly divorced man struggles through some very uninspired living. After much metaphysical musing, the trilogy ends with the protagonist going home to watch kiddie shows on television. A nutritionist might note that the character's "terrific" breakfast of sugar-laden packaged cereal, hardly an adequate meal for one contemplating cosmic truths, might contribute to his alternating lethargy and nervousness. Budgett and Dumm's illustrations for these stores make effective use of the drab, winter urban landscape.

"Getting Adjusted" focuses on life in Cleveland, allowing Pekar to air his own views on his home town, as well as those of a San Francisco woman newly arrived in the Ohio industrial city. The brutally frank discussion of racial tension in this and other **American Splendor** stories and vignettes is especially noteworthy, treating the subject in an intelligent manner utterly lacking on most television programs.

The remainder of No. 3 has a lighter tone,



A typical Gene Deitch cartoon about record collectors—from *The Cat*, 1948

" 'Mellow-Lips' Jaxon was in the studio on this recording date—if you listen closely you can hear him sneeze during the third chorus!"

An example of Pekar's neo-realistic narrative approach to the same subject

with Mr. Boats, a cantankerous but loveable hospital employee, and a philosophical janitor named Rollins providing most of the enjoyment. An otherwise favorable survey of **American Splendor** appearing in New York's **Village Voice** took R. Crumb to task for his renderings of Rollins and other Black characters. Writer Carola Dibbell failed to take into account that hardly anyone Crumb draws, White or Black, ends up looking attractive.

Nowhere is this more evident than in "The Young Crumb Story" and "How I Quit Collecting Records," two stories from issue No. 4 which trace and outline the friendship between artist Crumb and writer Pekar while also delineating the development of **American Splendor.** Crumb's self-portraits are almost disturbing in their sheer negativity. Pekar likewise emerges from Crumb's pen looking stoop-shouldered and somewhat apelike in a torn T-shirt. Harvey nevertheless defends the cartoonist, arguing that Crumb "captures my elemental essence and really understands my compulsions."

Pekar obviously has a good grasp of his own compulsions, too. Two stories in No. 4, the aforementioned "An Argument at Work" and "Out of the Past," graphically illustrate the various intertwining frustrations, serious and petty, that affect Harvey (called by his Yiddish name Herschel in the above stories) at home and at work.

When asked about the two Herschel stories (both wonderfully illustrated by Gerry Shamray, another young Cleveland artist), Pekar gave the following reply: "I don't write straight autobiography. I sometimes change the names of some of my characters and put events that happened in one context into another; I sometimes compress things that happened over days or months into one day ... It's extremely important for me to write as accurately as possible. The more accurate my stories are, the more people can identify with them and the more impact they have on them."

Even though they may appear under different names, one can easily figure out that several characters share Harvey's intellectual attitudes and physical appearance. For instance, many of the record collecting stories portray a government flunky named Jack the Bellboy, a Pekar homage to the frenetic Lionel Hampton record of the same name.

Prior to Pekar, the best jazz-oriented cartoons were done by animation director Gene Deitch for **The Record Changer**, a collector's periodical of the late 1940s. Deitch, the father of underground cartoonists Kim and Simon Deitch, invented a character named The Cat whose misadventures were drawn in a style bearing traces of James Thurber and Virgil Partch, with a touch of the early Harvey Kurtzman ("Hey, Look!").

No. 4's "Ridin' the Dog" reveals just how far removed **American Splendor** usually is from Deitch's style. Pekar, sitting on a bus next to avant garde jazzman Sun Ra, asks the musician simple, matter-of-fact questions. Deitch, in capsulizing a similar scene, had his foolish fan ask an old New Orleans clarinetist, "Is it true, Mr. Neezer, that during the decline of your staccato period that your contrapuntal attack and polyrhythmic patterns embodied certain Doddsian influences?" While first rate satire, this and many other Deitch gags cannot be fully appreciated by those unfamiliar with the work of Johnny Dodds and other early jazz musicians.

Pekar seldom strides this path, with the exception of the aptly titled "For Boppers Only," a one-panel strip appearing in No. 3. Pekar converses on the phone with Bob Armstrong, creator of Dizzy Ratstein, the trumpet playing rat. Harvey suggests that Ratstein's pianist should be named Dodo Marmarodent in honor of keyboard wizard Dodo Marmarosa, whose playing Pekar admires greatly. Harvey's feet rest on a table next to some "Chemisterini" and "Vouti" textbooks. Both refer to the fanciful academic subjects mentioned on Slim Gaillard's (see **Fanfare** No. 3) 1946 recor-

RIGHT AWAY HE KNOWS SHE WANTS HIM TO KEEP HIS DISTANCE.
UH, THIS WEEKEND? I'M DOING SOMETHING THIS WEEKEND.
BUT HE PERSISTS, GRIMLY PLAYING OUT HIS HAND.
WELL, NOT NECESSARILY THIS WEEKEND. JUST SOMETIME WHEN YOU'RE FREE.
WE'LL SEE.
"WE'LL SEE," WHADDYA MEAN, "WE'LL SEE?"

Art by Gerry Shamray. A brush-off sets the stage for "An Argument at Work," No. 4

ding of "School Kids Hop," a record on which Dodo Marmarosa plays, by the way. To further add to the jam session atmosphere, the lyrics of Dizzy Gillespie's "Oop Bop Sh'bam" cascade from the speakers of Pekar's hi-fi rig.

Several other stories in No. 4 successfully achieve Pekar's stated ambition of providing realistic and thought-provoking entertainment in comic book form. "Lunch with Carmella" elaborates the sad but too often true saga of an eccentric government worker who has accumulated too much seniority to be fired. Most working people should also easily identify with "Sid's Detroit Job Interview" and "Going To Work," two accounts of blue collar work as told from differing viewpoints.

Pekar remarried in July, 1977. His second wife, Lark, (they are now divorced) shows up as a c h a r a c t e r in **Splendor** No. 5. "Freddy Visits For The Weekend" pictures the couple's domestic life while they were still happily married. "An Everyday Horror Story," a long and fairly suspenseful story of Pekar's prolonged bout with a disabling vocal cord ailment, records their honeymoon trip to Oregon in picturesque fashion. Gerry Shamray again deserves mention for "Horror Story's" wistful but striking sketchwork.

Of greater overall interest, however, are "Emil," "Scenes from Star Books," and "Leonard & Marie," three stories which stand among Pekar's finest work to date, and unlike his earlier portrayal of old women in supermarkets, all express sensitive and insightful ideas regarding the lives of the elderly in America.

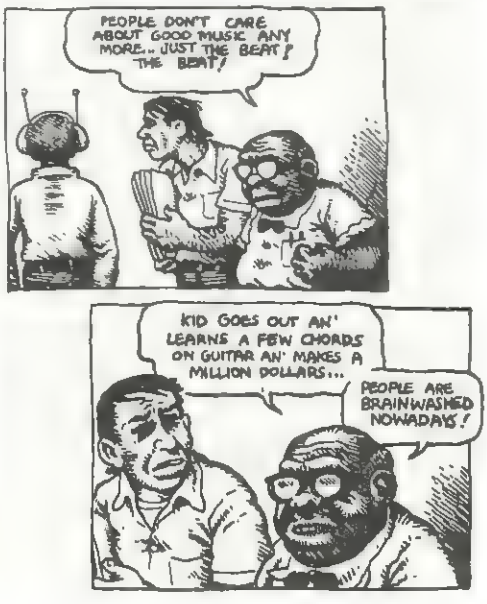
Once again, in "Emil," Pekar closely examines the origins and perpetuation of racial hatred. Emil, a Ukrainian immigrant, was once a proud member of the NAACP and believed strongly in its goals. Receiving rough treatment at the hands of young black hoodlums turns Emil away from his previous idealism. Pekar's own narrative commentary provides a balanced representation of Emil's situation, one which, like the race issue itself, remains unresolved.

As in his remembrances of his father's modest grocery store, Harvey's anecdotal glimpse of an aging owner of a used book store displays a keen understanding of the difficulties confronting a small merchant. Local eccentrics tend to gravitate towards Star Books, perhaps sensing that they can behave in a less restrained manner than in larger stores patrolled by security guards. Another annoying part of the book dealer's daily routine are cheapskates who make ridiculously low offers for large quantity purchases of books and records.

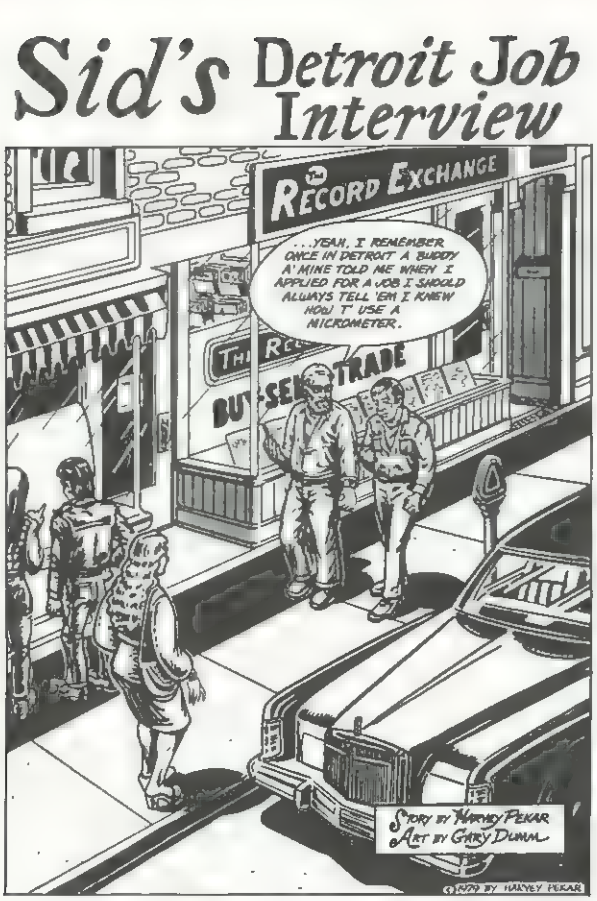
Harvey plays matchmaker in "Leonard & Marie," attempting to bring two lonely people together. Though they seem suited for one another, they fail to hit off at their meeting arranged by Harvey. The intent of this story is to counterbalance the fantasy version of late-in-life romance seen, for instance, in the still popular 1971 film **Harold and Maude.** Similarly, Pekar's occasional dramatizations of 1950s teenagers are a far cry from the sanitized artificiality of television's "Happy Days."

The content of **American Splendor** No. 6 is almost entirely serious. R. Crumb, clearly Pekar's first choice for drawing humorous subjects, was unavailable to contribute to this issue. Michael T. Gilbert, a regular in **Imagine** and **Star-Reach,** takes up some of the slack created by Crumb's absence. Of the comedic characters, Rollins makes his usual welcome appearance, but the feisty

Story BY HARVEY PEKAR
EMIL
Art BY Gary Dumm & Greg Budgett
FROM 1959 TO 1971 I LIVED IN AN AREA - YOU COULDN'T EVEN CALL IT A NEIGHBORHOOD - BETWEEN THE CAMPUS OF CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY AND THE BLACK GHETTO. AS TIME WENT ON IT BECAME MORE AND MORE CRIME-RIDDEN AND RUN DOWN. EVENTUALLY THE ROW HOUSE WHERE I LIVED WAS TORN DOWN.
I WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT A GUY WHO, IN THE MIDDLE 60'S, LIVED NEXT DOOR TO ME IN THAT BUILDING.
©1980 BY HARVEY PEKAR
HIS NAME WAS EMIL. HE WAS ABOUT FIFTY-FIVE YEARS OLD WHEN I MET HIM. HE WAS RUTHENIAN. A RUTHENIAN IS ESSENTIALLY A UKRANIAN WHO LIVED IN A PLACE IN THE CARPATHIAN MOUNTAIN REGION CALLED RUTHENIA. IT WAS ONCE PART OF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN EMPIRE AND LATER OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA. NOW IT'S PART OF THE U.S.S.R. RUTHENIANS ARE ORTHODOX IN RELIGION, NOT CATHOLIC.
EMIL WAS THE SON OF IMMIGRANT PARENTS. HE WAS AN OLD BACHELOR, A LONER. HE PROBABLY NEVER MARRIED BECAUSE HE WAS AFRAID OF WOMEN. IN SOME WAYS HE WAS PRETTY BACKWARD SOCIALLY.
HE WAS A LABORER AT REPUBLIC STEEL. HE'D WORKED THERE SINCE HE WAS A TEENAGER IN THE 1930'S. HE WAS INVOLVED IN THE "LITTLE STEEL" STRIKE OF 1937, DURING WHICH HE WAS SHOT IN THE HAND BY A GUARD WHILE HE WAS ON A PICKET LINE.


PEOPLE DON'T CARE ABOUT GOOD MUSIC ANY MORE... JUST THE BEAT! THE BEAT!
KID GOES OUT AN' LEARNS A FEW CHORDS ON GUITAR AN' MAKES A MILLION DOLLARS...
PEOPLE ARE BRAINWASHED NOWADAYS!

"Jack the Bellboy and Mr. Boats," No. 3


Sid's Detroit Job Interview
RECORD EXCHANGE
...YEAH, I REMEMBER ONCE IN DETROIT A BUDDY A'MINE TOLD ME WHEN I APPLIED FOR A JOB I SHOULD ALWAYS TELL 'EM I KNEW HOW T' USE A MICROMETER.
STORY BY HARVEY PEKAR
ART BY GARY DUMM
©1979 BY HARVEY PEKAR

LIBRARY STORY
TAKE TWO
STORY BY HARVEY PEKAR · ©1979 · ART BY MICHAEL T. GILBERT
HERE'S OUR MAN TRYING TO LOOK UP WHAT YEAR HE SAW HENRY KISSINGER ON A T.V. SHOW CALLED "TOWN MEETING OF THE WORLD." HE STOPS FOR A MINUTE TO DIG A CONVERSATION BETWEEN AN OLD LIBRARIAN AND A SHABBILY DRESSED GUY WHO'S BUGGING HER ABOUT SOMETHING HE WROTE.
SIR, WE DON'T FEEL QUALIFIED TO EVALUATE IT HERE. WHY DON'T I GIVE YOU THE NUMBER OF THE CLEVELAND AREA ARTS COUNCIL? YOU CAN TAKE IT THERE AND THEY CAN READ IT AND EVALUATE IT FOR YOU.
BOY! NOBODY LIKES MY POETRY!
I SHOW IT TO EVERYONE AN' NO ONE LIKES IT!
BUT I READ THIS STUFF IN HARPERS AN' ATLANTIC AN' SOME A THESE INTELLECTUAL MAGAZINES.
AN' IT DON'T MAKE NO SENSE TO ME
SIR, THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH WRITING POETRY THAT RHYMES.

Mr. Boats is missing, while Dr. Gesundheit (who received a big buildup on the cover of No. 5) has only a cameo.

The nature of friendship constitutes the basis for No. 6's "Rip Off Chick," "Read This," and "Prelude, Party, and Post-Party," all of which demonstrate the universal appeal **American Splendor** strives for.

"Rip Off Chick," the tale of an ex- prostitute whose heart is made of anything but gold, sets the stage perfectly for "Read This," a simple example of what true friendship means to Harvey Pekar. Class prejudice, another constant **American Splendor** theme, is scrutinized in Pekar's story of meeting an old high school acquaintance at a party. Harvey's lifestyle has created some peculiar problems for him, some of which he explained in an interview in Bruce Duncan's Berkeley publication **Tele-Times.** Said Pekar, "I've encountered plenty of women who really like my writing but wouldn't dream of eating dinner with me because I make my living as a file clerk."

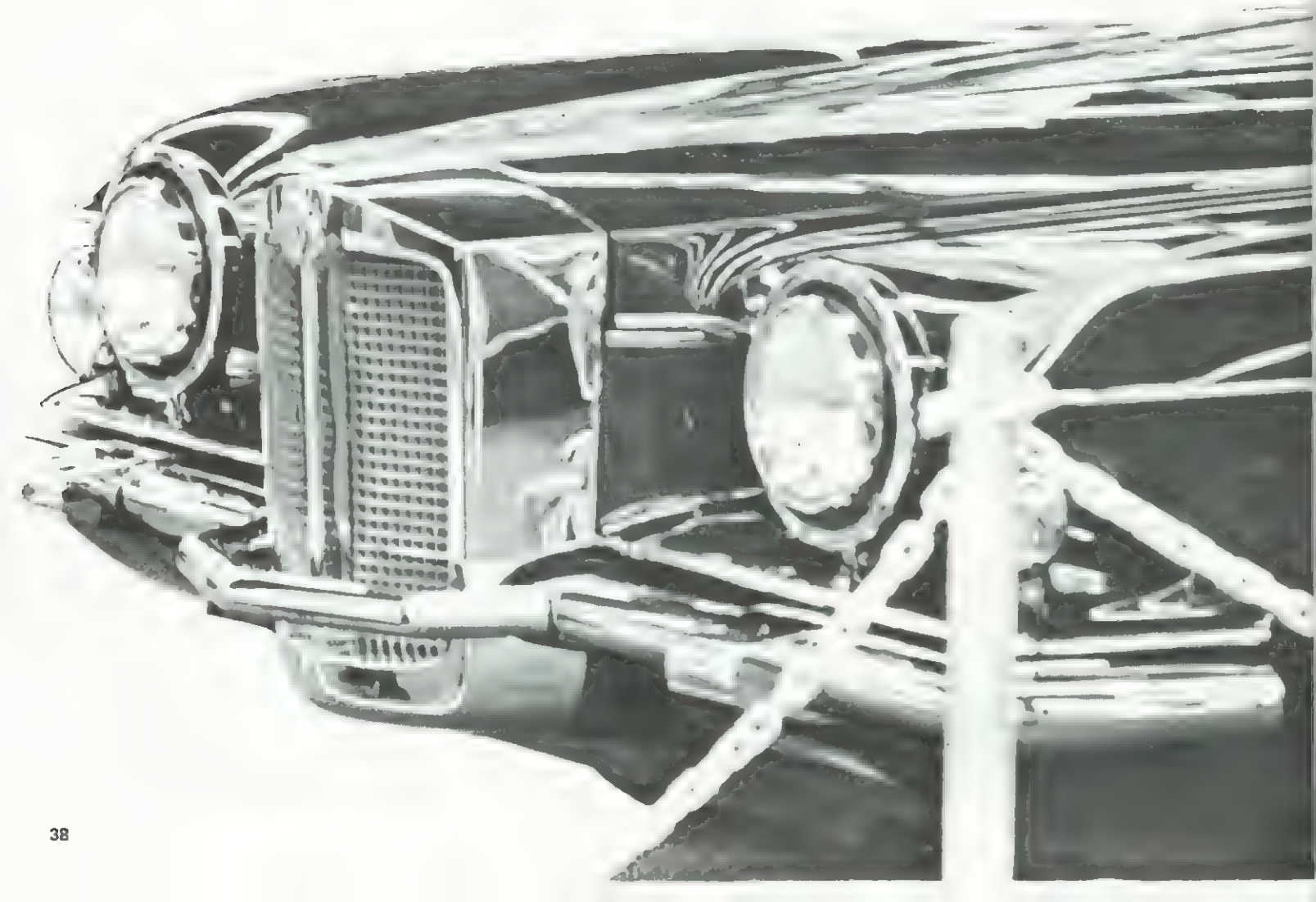
File clerks and other menial laborers are the stuff **American Splendor** is made of. "Junkshopping: An Allegory" (No. 6) summarizes the philosophy behind the magazine. In chronicling the lives of everyday people "from off the streets of Cleveland, "Pekar is, in effect, searching for diamonds in the rough in much the same manner he uses when rummaging through secondhand stores for discarded items he finds new uses for. To Pekar, a janitor's advice "to get a mental pitchuh of yo'seff doin' what you want t'do" is just as good (and much easier on the checkbook) as attending a high-priced human potential movement seminar on "Actualizing Your Conceptions of Alternative Realities."

Pekar thinks of his comic book as a natural extension of his previous roles of "class clown and street corner comedian." Much of his work is as much about the process of people telling one another stories as the actual events themselves. When seen in this light, **American Splendor's** "talking heads" style of narration makes more sense.

At times, the device of a character looking straight at the reader approximates the delivery of a standup comedian. Pekar has cited the late Lenny Bruce as one of his influences, and No. 2's "Ozzie Nelson's Open Letter to Crumb" is a fine example of satire in the Bruce tradition. Although published in 1977, the story was prompted by a letter Pekar wrote to Crumb five years earlier. Speaking through the mask of Ozzie Nelson, Pekar gently chastises his friend for complaining about Ralph Bakshi's animated films based on Crumb's character Fritz the Cat. In so doing, Pekar allows Nelson to try to straighten out his own image which has been distorted by the part he played for so many years on radio and TV. Ironically enough, Pekar (at the time of this writing) has also been approached by producers about selling the movie rights to his comics. On the subject of cinema, some observers have compared the stark visual style of **American Splendor** to such post-war Italian neo-realist films as **Open City** and **Bicycle Thief.**

So dig it, man. You're the cat who has to outline your story ideas to your artists by using crude stick figures, yet you're still out there thinking up new and challenging material while others have gone commerical or fallen by the wayside. You want the world to know there's more to America than Archie Bunker and Laverne & Shirley. You're sick of certain adult contemporary value systems which label you and your friends as losers and underachievers. You can't sit back and let them sell such a distorted, unfair bill of goods. So you continue to publish **American Splendor.** And we're really glad you do.

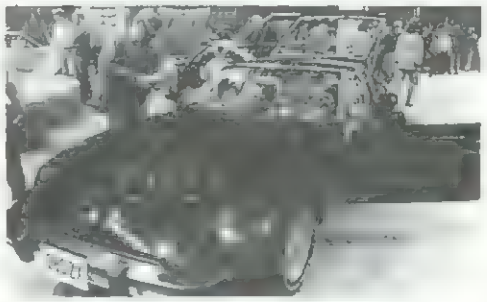
CAR TREK



She looks at her reflection in the rear view mirror of the maroon Jaguar, runs the tips of her fingers along the tapered edges of her dark hair, checks her digital watch, and gets out of the car; it's time to perform the car again, to tell them all about specifications, miles to the gallon, fifth gear, rear window wiper, steel-belted radial tires. They're out there on the rented carpet, their eyes glazed over with daydreams of opulence, fantasies of power making them high as they open the doors of Ferraris and Maseratis and BMWs and worship at the glossy alien altars of Italy, Germany, Japan, and Sweden.

It's all fantasy to the people wandering around in this giant showroom. I see the teenaged sons of suburban factory workers sitting for a brief moment behind the sculptured wheels of 30,000 dollar sportscars they will never drive. Nearby their fathers sit in their middle-aged splendor on fulldress Hondas, the knights of the road, the bad bikers they never were in their youth. Not for them the glossy models reading their mental scripts in the reassuring tones of flight attendants, the women they have seen associated with the expensive cars since the first ad appeared in a popular magazine. Not that there are not a few wives here at the 22nd Annual Imported Car Show in San Francisco's Brooks Hall, but that it is mostly a male scene; car fantasies and the imagery of the road machine being a part of the male psyche almost from birth. I remember the child in me rolling a tiny model car along the sidewalk, and later pedaling a red car up that same walk. My mother sacrificed a lot to give me my first car, an old beat-up, discolored '41 Ford that ran for only a few days. I was one of the kids with his nose against the glass of the automobile showroom when they unveiled the first Thunderbird. The imagery of cars followed me all my life. In my high school, you had status when you had a car and you had the status accorded the car. If you had no wheels at all, you were nothing, pitied, one of those who would be staying at home night, one missing from the drive-in culture that was developing in the late forties and early fifties. If you had any kind of car, you had some status. You existed. They had to look at you as you pulled into the drive-in and ordered coke and fries and turned up Buddy Holly or the Everly Brothers on the radio. You had some privacy, a place to be alone with someone, to learn how to lead a separate life. You had freedom. You could go to another town for a game or a show. If you had the newest and best car, you were envied. Most of us had old cars and we did what we could with them, customized them some when our income permitted, kept them sitting in our driveways on blocks when the hard times hit. We liked to drag race, and our cars were called hot rods or jalopies or heaps or junkers or beaters.

I saw my first Rolls Royce on Broadway in North Beach. It looked very sleek and expensive with the bumpers and headlights all polished. The rear windows were tinted dark so I couldn't see who was riding inside. Here next to me in the showroom is the latest Rolls, a Silver Wraith II, a dark beauty I could buy for only $91,498.00. A friend of mine who writes tv scripts said he'd like to change cars, but "you can't find anything on the lots that looks like anything for less than sixteen thou." That would almost make a down payment on an Aston-Martin or a Jag.



There are some priceless cars here from the collectors. The oldest is a racing car, a 1903 Napier. Next to it is Jay Heumann's Hispano-Suiza, then a 1939 Maybach Zeppelen Sedan from germany, and a yellow 1931 Horch with black fenders. The Horch is German, too. Thea newest and most unique car on the floor was one of Alain Jean-Marie Clenet's contemporary classics. Named after the French engineer, it's a 224" Roadster with a V-8 engine built by the Lincoln-Mercury Division of the Ford Motor Company. The Clenet is an exclusive car. There were 250 Clenet 1's built.

Certainly the most avant-garde of the cars on display was the Briggs-Stratton Hybrid, with six wheels, powered by batteries and a gasoline engine. The extra two wheels are necessary for the rear of the car which holds the twelve 6-volt batteries.

"Another nice feature on the TR-7 is that we do have the electrically retractible headlights. These fold down flush with the hood..." The talk goes on, slickly worded promo to stroke the tired and weary as they trudge by. A model in skin tight silver pants explains the virtues of the world's most expensive car, a $200,000 dollar Ferrari Rainbow. It's a gray job that looks like it would be more at home in a scene from STAR WARS. The cheap cars (ten grand and less) are open so that people can climb in and out of them, but the Rolls and the other expensive cars are locked and guarded. There are some fantasies you can't even have unless you're rich.

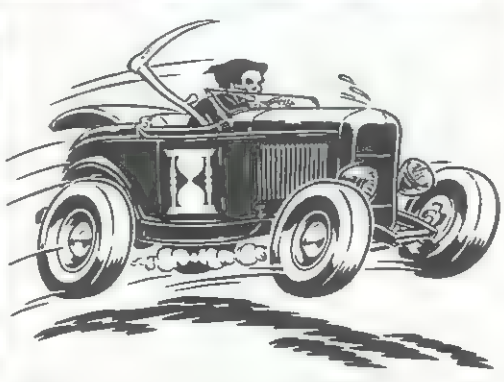
"Underneath the glamorous shape, you have the responsive Jaguar engine." "Even the courtesy lights are uncommonly thoughtful. They stay on a few seconds after the doors open and close, giving you a lot of time to settle down." As she talks, the Jaguar XJ-6 moves around on a turntable. Her spiel over, the woman retains her mask as a man asks her some questions she can't answer. She tells him she has to adher to her script. She's cold, professional, tough. After all, tomorrow it will be a carpet show or tv sets. She checks her make-up in the mirror of the Jag. No smears from the microphone. She's all right. Not her fault some of the men pick up on her sexual message and want to flirt around. Just a job with her. Another product to sell. At least she gets to wear pants this year. It used to be mini-skirts and bathing suits all the time.

But a 90,000 dollar car that gets only nine miles to a dollar-and-fifty cent gallon of gas? Somehow I get the feeling that Rolls and Royce didn't have me in mind, but that's all right, too. I leave the showroom to the sound of doors opening and closing, kids ohing and ahing, mothers looking bored, and most of us probably wondering if the automobile really has a future in America any more. □

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY
CLAY GEERDES

THE CHROME KID

ROBERT WILLIAMS



PHOTOS AND ARTICLE BY **RAY ZONE**

Forget what you've learned: There are really only two cultures in America.

High culture is the world of the academy and the museum, a classic tradition that goes back through the dawn of the Enlightenment to ancient Greece. Low culture is the world of the street, the mass reproduction of magazines, newspapers and comic books. Low culture is the culture of tattoo artists, poster painters, pornographers, biker artists and pinstripers.

Robert "Heironymous Bob" Williams is an illustrator, cartoonist and painter who has bridged these two worlds in several ways. He has invested such specifically lowbrow forms of expressions as the T-shirt, the tattoo, hot-rod art and funny animal comics with the visual realism of the classic art tradition. In a series of hyperrealistic oil paintings, Williams has made the cartoon the very nexus of his artistic exploration. Williams calls these paintings "Supercartoons" and says he is attempting to "render thought" with bizarre juxtapositions of subjective imagery acutely and objectively detailed.

"There are no ground rules for lowbrow," Williams explains. "People say that a true artist can work inside limitations. Well, I just want to walk all over the limitations and not let them get in my way."

Bondo Bob (he has many nicknames) was infused with the romance of street life from his earliest days. He was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in 1943, and spent his childhood in the deep South. Bob's father owned a stable of stock cars in the early fifties and also operated the largest drive-in restaurant in the South. When he was eleven, the Kid (another nickname) started to build his first hot rod, a '34 Ford coupe. Expelled from school in the ninth grade for disciplinary reasons, Williams joined a traveling carnival.

In 1963, Williams came to California to study art, but after a couple of years he found himself at the unemployment office, where a position was offered that several applicants had already turned down. It was the position of art director with the notorious Ed "Big Daddy" Roth. For Williams, it was "like having a chance of being ordained a Bishop by the Pope."

Big Daddy Roth's business in monster T-shirts was just beginning to take off then, and he needed someone to handle the marketing. Williams plunged right in, designing phantasmagoric mail-order ads, posters and decals, eventually becoming the star T-shirt artist of the booming business. When Roth began publishing *Choppers* magazine, Williams created a popular feature called "Tattoo of the Month." Bob has since met fans who have had his designs emblazoned on different parts of their anatomies, an ultimate compliment if ever there was one. He also created the colors for a few outlaw motorcycle gangs.

From Roth Studios' stalwart Ed Newton, Williams learned to render chrome in a realistic black-and-white ink style, and shimmering chrome imagery has since become his trademark. Though he rejects the mantle, the Chrome Kid is undoubtedly our preeminent

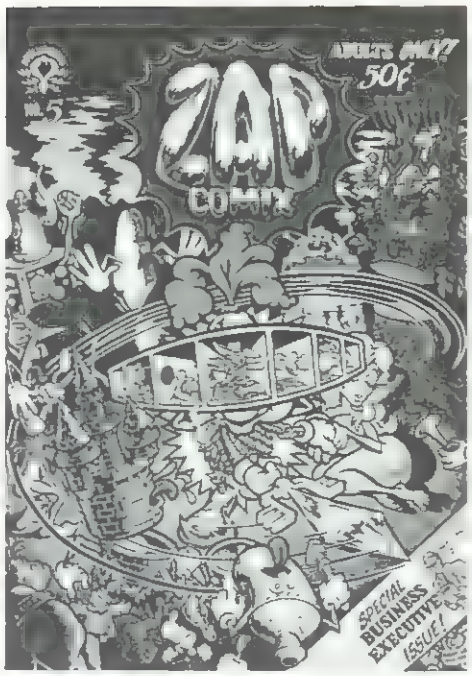
living hot rod artist. All of Williams' work in this genre shows an intimate knowledge of the milieu, complete with vividly detailed social history reflected in his pieces.

"Hot-rod art," Williams explains, "is a metaphor for speed, thrills and danger." Bob's special commemoration honoring the Ford Flathead V8 engine, first appearing in *Hot Rod* magazine, is a visual apotheosis of the hot rod tradition. The Chrome Kid has depicted in this work the various popular uses of the Flathead engine, including Dry Lakes, Dirt Track, Drag Strip, and, most vividly, the Street.

Williams remains an enthusiastic hot rodder. A '34 Ford sedan of indiscernible color sits in his garage and he is presently building a classic '32 Ford hot rod from scratch. Bob is a collector of hot rod history and paraphernalia who can tell you where every board and dirt track in the Southwest was located. To this day, he and his wife Suzanne remain regular habitues of Ascot Raceway during sprint season.

For car show promotor Bob Larivee, Williams has created three exceptionally detailed posters of hot-rod life celebrating the custom car cult. One of these posters is a dramatic scene of an illegal hot-rod street race that is about to curtail with an imminent disaster.

Through his association with Big Daddy Roth, Williams met cartoonists Gilbert Shelton and Rick Griffin. Eventually he also met Robert Crumb, who had already started *Zap Comix*, flagship of the undergrounds. In 1969,



Gilbert Shelton, along with Jack Jackson, Fred Todd, and Dave Moriarty, formed Rip Off Press as an artist's co-op.

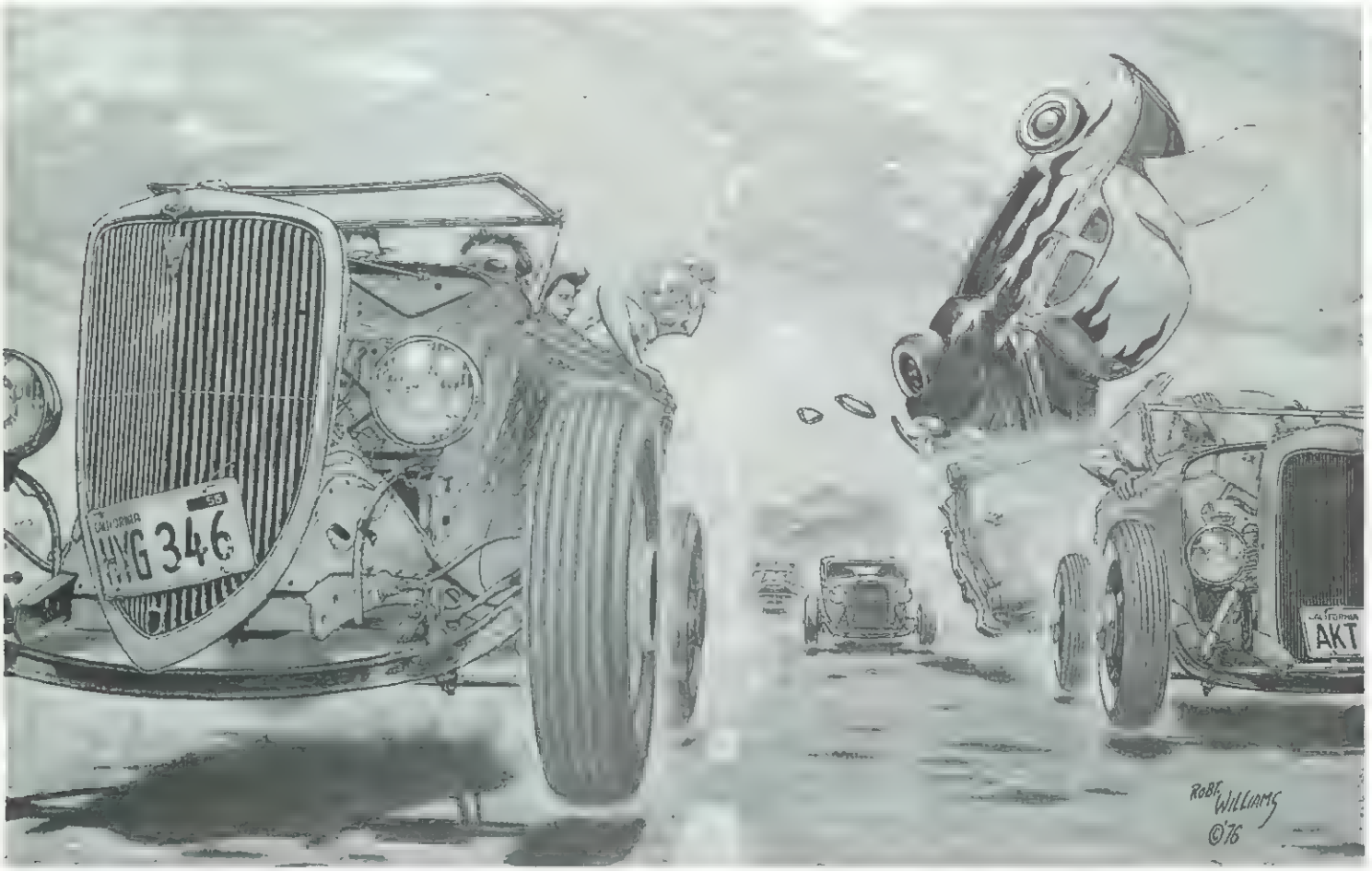
The "adults only" underground comix which began appearing in the mid-sixties were created by the children of comic books, TV and movies. They are a satirical response to an asexual entertainment, the work of grown-up children, self-created auteurs working with freedom of expression in a popular medium.

Crumb began inviting such artists as Victor Moscoso, S. Clay Wilson, and Rick Griffin to work in the pages of *Zap*. Heironymous Bob was invited to contribute to issue No. 4, and he has been featured in all subsequent issues.

Most of the art in underground comix at the time was an extension of the psychedelic graphics of San Francisco rock-concert posters from the heyday of Haight Ashbury. "You'll notice in the early undergrounds there was a lot of intense artwork that was hard to make out," Williams says. "The penultimate of all that intense work was the chrome centerspread." This is a reference to a Williams work in *Zap* No. 6, an intricately detailed and visually sensuous graphic entitled, "Beamin' Gleamer in a Flash in the Pan." This centerspread is one of the legendary achievements in underground comix. "When I did that," Williams notes, "people said, 'This is it. You've reached the pinnacle.' It blew everyone's mind."

Williams, self-styled "Esthetician of the Preposterous," characterizes the detail of his cartoons as a "revolt against the practicality of doing things quickly." It is the artistic freedom in underground comix that appeals to him. "I'm a one-man show," he says. "And I mean I do my own story. Exploration is the important thing. So, I still follow that fine art school of thought."

Williams' uncompromising stance is summed up on his business card, which features an absurd self-caricature as a classic bust,



HOT ROD RACE (acrylic on board, 16¼" x 12¾") depicts outlaw street racing in the 1950s a la the 1956 James Dean film REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE.

and this motto: "Better my hand be severed than be the crafter of some unartly thing."

Underground comix exemplify "the Bohemian syndrome," Williams says, a condition he defines as "making a romantic virtue out of what is contrary to the status quo." This element of revolt is a crucial aspect of both hot-rodding and modern art. What Williams terms "the will to exceed social barriers" is the aesthetic crux of underground comix. The underground comix artists, like the original surrealists, exploit shock for its artistic value.

"Sure, I exploit shock in my art," Williams admits. "But shock has got to continually change. You've got to find out what's new in shock to make it. If you have a medium where you can control quietness then you can have the loud bang. But if you have nothing but bangs to offer then you've got to continually be a parasite on some quiet situation."

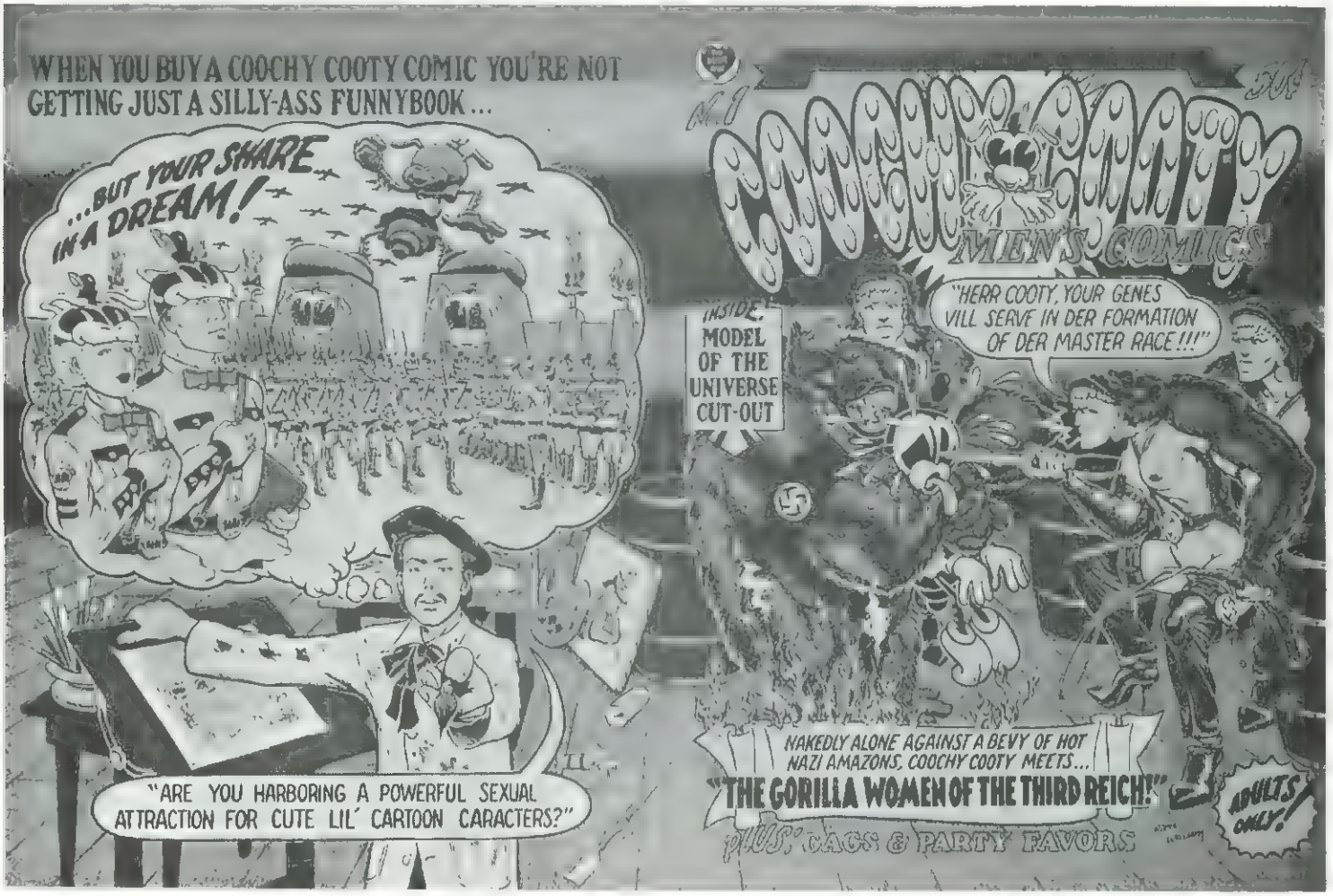
For the undergrounds, Williams created Coochy Cooty, a street-wise funny animal "derived from animation style, designed as a classic cartoon with segmented legs and a simple-to-draw body." The cooty, like many other funny animals in the undergrounds, has adventures in a world that Mickey Mouse never experienced. The cover story of the 1970 underground classic, *Coochy Cooty Men's Comics*, for example, was called "The Gorilla Women of the Third Reich." It is a visually intricate fantasy of sex and power pitting the cooty and some pachuco low-

riders against a horde of "Nazi amazons." The jest culminates on the back cover with a caricature of *Le Artiste* and a highly detailed thought balloon rendering the cooty's elevation to a monolithic symbol of fascism.

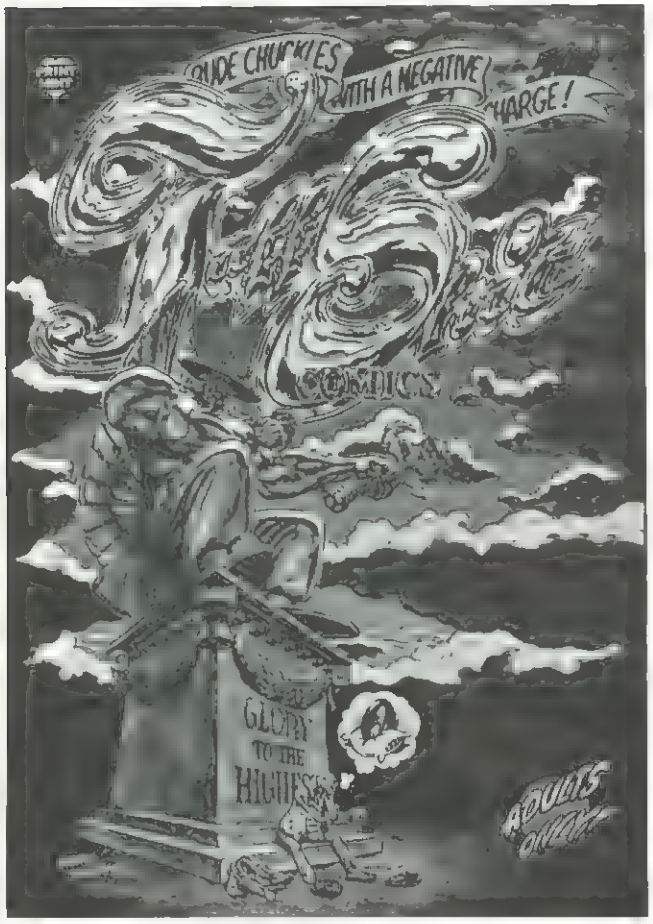
In the late sixties Bob also began to work in oil, and he is most proud of his work in this medium. His recent supercartoon oil paintings are mind-bogglingly detailed, using such techniques as extensive undercolor and amber varnish to convey his effects. Williams often grinds his own pigments, using methods that were common with the Old Masters. The difference, of course, is that Williams renders modern life with highly subjective imagery that is at once humorous and shocking.

Williams perfected his supercartoon oil paintings with a piece called "The Rooster's Lament," more commonly referred to among his following as "The Newspaper Vendor." This 1974 work shows a stylish woman in hot pants restraining her poodle as she enters a public building. The poodle is just about to annoy a lecherous, crippled newspaper vendor, who is depicted, via thought balloon, dreaming up a depraved fate for the dog and its mistress. When exhibited in San Francisco, one critic referred to it as "monorail garbage for a one-track mind." But it has also been called the one piece of art that "bridges cartoons with fine art."

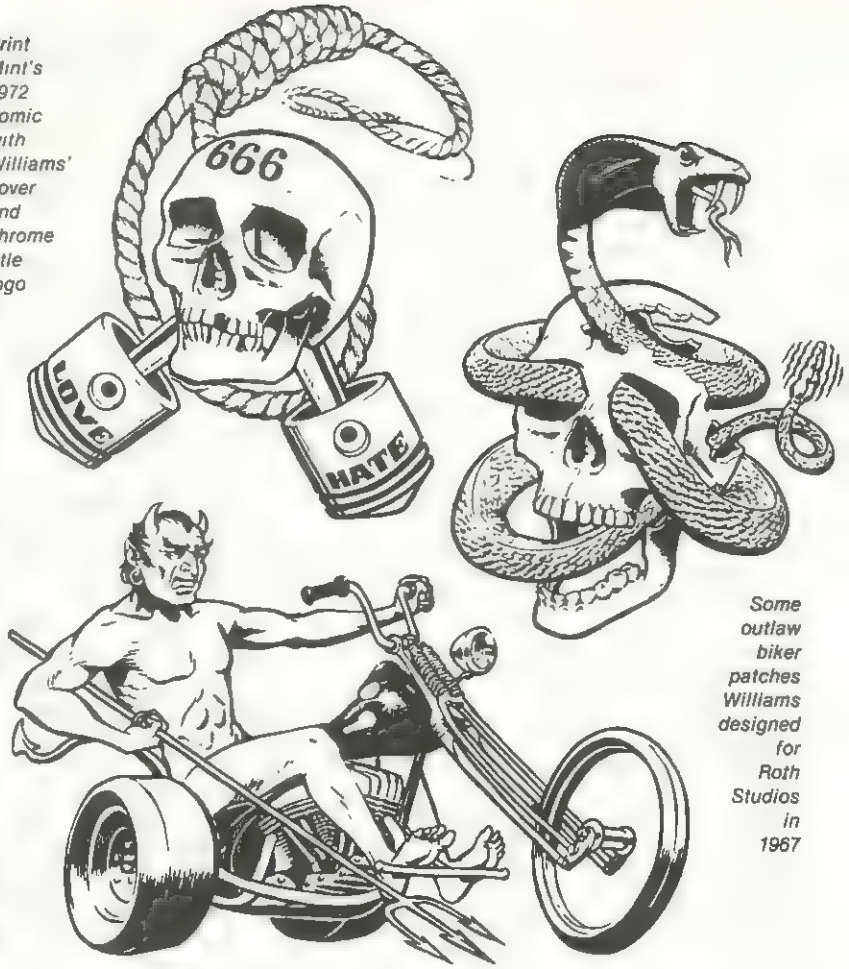
Williams recently completed his latest supercartoon oil painting, a vibrant rendition of


WHEN YOU BUY A COOCHY COOTY COMIC YOU'RE NOT GETTING JUST A SILLY-ASS FUNNYBOOK...
...BUT YOUR SHARE IN A DREAM!
"ARE YOU HARBORING A POWERFUL SEXUAL ATTRACTION FOR CUTE LIL' CARTOON CARACTERS?"
COOCHY COOTY
MEN'S COMICS
INSIDE: MODEL OF THE UNIVERSE CUT-OUT
"HERR COOTY, YOUR GENES VILL SERVE IN DER FORMATION OF DER MASTER RACE!!!"
NAKEDLY ALONE AGAINST A BEVY OF HOT NAZI AMAZONS, COOCHY COOTY MEETS...
"THE GORILLA WOMEN OF THE THIRD REICH!"
PLUS: GAGS & PARTY FAVORS
ADULTS ONLY!

©1970 Robert Williams and The Print Mint



Print Mint's 1972 comic with Williams' cover and chrome title logo



Some outlaw biker patches Williams designed for Roth Studios in 1967

© 1972 The Print Mint

the Scrimshaw skull entitled "Still Life with Apparition." A multihued bouquet of ectoplasm emanates from the skull, consisting of monsters, beasts, and assorted bugaboos that fall midway between funny animals and heiroglyphs. This work, along with several other recent oil paintings, will be included in a portfolio of eight prints to be called *The Art and Imagery of Robert Williams* and published by Schanes & Schanes of San Diego.

The objective rendering of his subjective imagery, Bob says, is "sort of like babbling with perfect diction." And like the surrealist artists, Williams often draws on dreams as inspiration for his work. "I would call it an 'emotional decision' or having a premonition of a design or story line," he says. "It's having an emotional premonition and following it up."

Williams works as much as six months to a year on each of his supercartoons. To support his painting, he creates T-shirt designs for Roach Studios and does freelance underground comix. Bob has executed a rendition of a modern Satan for the cover of *Cocaine Comix* No. 3 and finished a fable and new Coochy Cooty story for *Zap* No. 10.

Rip Off Press of San Francisco has put out *The Lowbrow Art of Robert Williams*, a fine-art book that presents a retrospective of Williams' career. It includes early ads for Big Daddy Roth, T-shirt designs, stories from *Zap, Hydrogen Bomb Funnies,* and *Coochy Cooty Men's Comics,* as well as several supercartoon oil paintings.

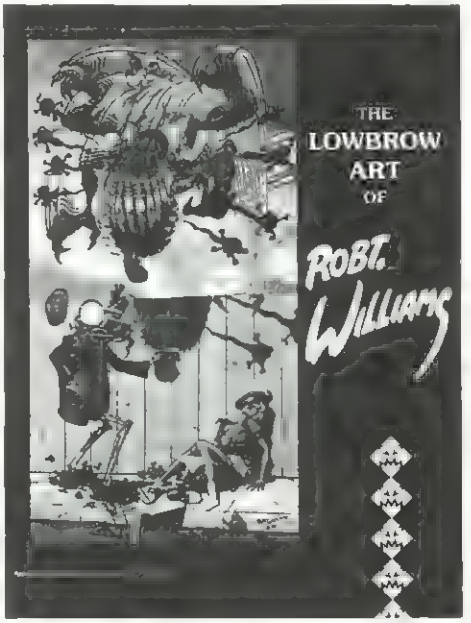
And still Williams continues to change. Adopting the pseudonym Fice Mook, Williams and an artist called AKA (also known as S. Clay Wilson) have produced a crude, limited-edition comic book called *Yama Yama/The Ugly Head.* The art in this is extremely primitive and jumbled; even close followers of the artists' styles will have trouble recognizing Williams and Wilson in the loose styles presented here. Williams is also preparing to apply this looseness to his painting, in a new series of works to be collectively called "Zombie Mystery" paintings.

In 1953, when Bobby Williams was reading *Mad* Comics and other EC titles, a critic named Dwight MacDonald in "A Theory of Mass Culture" wrote: "Mass culture has develped new media of its own, into which the serious artist rarely ventures: radio, the movies, comic books, detective stories, science fiction, television."

Who could foresee an artistic anomaly like Robert Williams? "The comic book is a very important art form," he says. "It is a four-dimensional item that takes on the element of time with pictures going on through a story." The cartoons of Robert Williams represent adult existential conflicts in the pictographic formulas of infancy. "Thirty or forty years from now the cartoon story will have its own place like painting or writing," Williams believes. "It won't be just the silly, funny papers, but will have a proper position."

By his own description, Williams says he's part of "a 200-year migration of hayseeds to get out here" to Southern California where he finds "a fantastic casualness in everything that's done." He is now a local artistic landmark, the resident *enfant terrible* of North Hollywood. Robert Williams is Supercartoonist and Esthetician of the Preposterous, Bondo Bob, Heironymous Bob, Bobby to his friends, Fice Mook, the Maestro of Lowbrow, and the Chrome Kid. □

***The Lowbrow Art of Robert Williams,** a deluxe 96-page paperback edition with 16 color plates, available for $10.95 from reputable dealers everywhere. Published by Rip Off Press, PO Box 14158, San Francisco, California 94114.*



© 1982 Robert Williams and Rip Off Press

AN INTERVIEW WITH BIG DADDY ROTH

PHOTOS AND INTERVIEW BY **RAY ZONE**

Ed "Big Daddy" Roth is an automotive genius, painter and cartoonist who is one of the important figures to come out of Southern California car culture. Over the years, Roth has designed and created many automobiles that are as much art objects, baroque sculptural forms, as objects of functional utility. Roth creations such as the Beatnik Bandit, a futuristic version of a thirties Ford hot rod, or the Mysterion, an assymetrical bubbletop coupe driven by two Thunderbird engines, belong in a museum as well as in the street.

Roth is a true product of the Southern California hot rod ethos who has never strayed from the dictates of style, speed and rebellion that define the sub-culture. Repeatedly resisting the blandishments of Detroit, he prefers instead to work with a creative autonomy that has produced some of the most bizarre curvilinear designs in automotive history.

Big Daddy's fame reached a pinnacle in the sixties when he toured the country in Custom Car Caravans, making many personal appearances where he personally airbrushed Weirdo and monster cartoons on T-shirts for hundreds of teenagers. As "King of the Monster Painters," Roth produced a popular series of "Custom Monsters" for Revell model kits that included such comic and bizarre characters as Mr. Gasser, Mother's Worry, Dragnut, and the Rat Fink.

There were also four issues of ***Big Daddy Roth*** *comics, decals, posters and a* ***Monster Coloring Book*** *which was actually a collection of Roth's T-shirt designs.*

When Tom Wolfe celebrated Roth in his article and subsequent book entitled ***The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamlined Baby,*** *Big Daddy became a national figure. It was Roth, according to Wolfe, who "more than any other of the customizers, has kept alive the spirit of alienation and rebellion that is so important to the teenage ethos that customizing grew up in." Wolfe characterized Roth as "the Salvador Dali" of the custom car movement, "a surrealist in his designs, a showman by temperament, a prankster."*

Roth is a perennial teenager. Wolfe cites an instance of his dadaist rebelliousness: Roth would habitually appear at custom auto shows in Levi's and T-shirt. When one youthful Indiana fan took a picture of him sleeping in his car in a cornfield with his bare feet sticking out the window (flies hovering about) and sent it to Revell, the company asked Roth to clean up his image. In a gesture of reverse rebelliousness, Big Daddy bought a full suit with tails, boiled shirt and top hat in which he made all personal appearances thereafter.

Today Ed Roth runs a lettering and sign shop in Fullerton, is a design consultant for Knott's Berry Farm and does custom pinstriping and lettering at his house in La Mirada. The man will pinstripe anything, at reasonable rates. He has what must be the surest hand in the West. Watching Roth pinstriping and lettering a dragster, or airbrushing a T-shirt, is like observing the natural order.

Every year for the last four years Roth has held a Ratfink Revival as a reunion for old

friends. In attendance at the most recent Revival were Ed Newton, Rick Griffin and Robert Williams, all artists and alumni of Roth Studios. I went down to the last Ratfink Revival, met Big Daddy and watched his action with the airbrush as he created monster cartoons on T-shirts for several onlookers. I talked to him a few days later.

When were you born, Ed?

1932. In West Hollywood.

Have you lived in Southern California all your life?

Oh yeah, around Bell. We moved out here to Orange County in '70.

What was the first car you ever customized?

When I went to high school, it was a '32 Ford. I channeled it, but I didn't chop it. As big as I am, I needed the windshield as tall as I could get it. I only customized about three, but after I got to the third one I started building 'em all out of fiberglas. So twenty to thirty after that are all fiberglas.

Where are these cars today?

Up at Harrah's a good majority of 'em. One's down in Texas and has been lost and there's a couple more up at Santa Paula. But, see, as soon as I get 'em done, I use 'em for about a year and then I sell 'em.

Where's the Mysterion today?

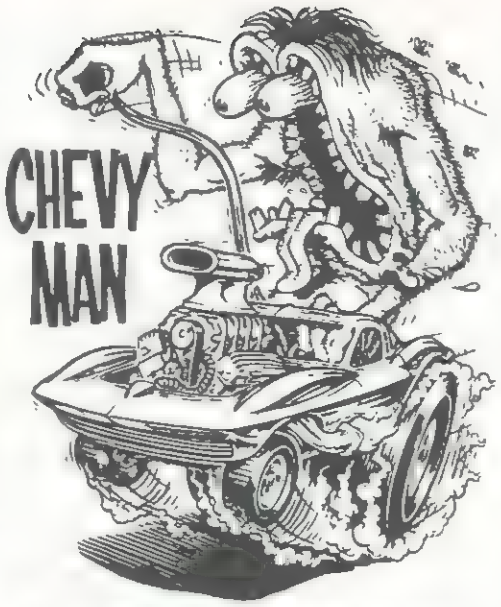
That's the one that got lost in Texas. It broke up on a trailer so I told the guy just to grab the wheels off it and leave all the rest of it down there.

How many auto shows and teen fairs have you appeared at over the years?

I would say probably three hundred and fifty.

Do you still occasionally customize cars?

I don't customize the cars anymore. But I'm working a lot with people to customize their business attitude, vans, garbage disposal things, guys who need a little different approach. I'm not much into the car thing anymore. But I am building one now that's going to run on the sun. It's about fifty percent finished. It's called the Pink Bazooka. I try to pick names that are, you know, easy to remember.



I think that one is.

Well, the Beatnik Bandit has always been good. And the Druid Princess. Those are the names that the kids remember.

Did you read comics as a kid?

Yeah. When I was a kid we used to trade 'em. You know, like, I'll give you two Supermans for one Batman, or one Archie for two lesser known ones. The top characters when I was a kid were Superman, Batman and Captain America. And, of course, number two was really Captain Marvel. But, see, Captain Marvel was infringing on Superman's patent because Captain Marvel stopped bullets and he also flew. So Superman sued him. And Superman got the judgement. Seems like that was around '51 or '52.

So the superhero comics were your favorites?

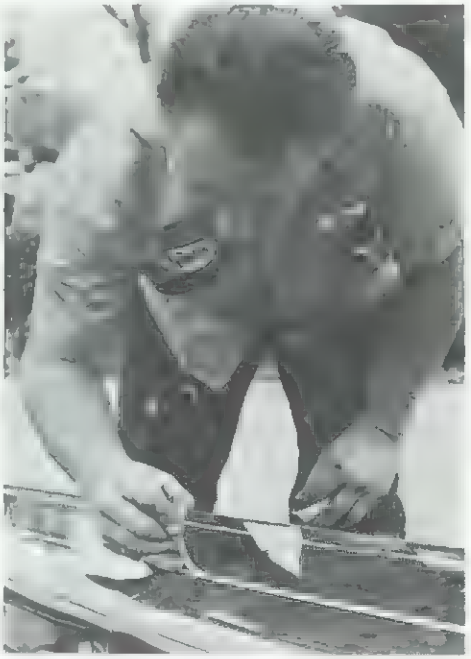
Oh yeah, sure. They were a good thing. They still are today, you know, G-rated stuff you can bring home to the kids. I keep tabs on what's going on. I even went to a Devo concert last New Years.

Where did you get the idea for the Ratfink?

The Ratfink, to me, was an alternative to the Disney characters of the thirties. Ratfink represents the sixties. I'm coming out with him again to represent the eighties—this time he's got something to say. He's got something to say for women's rights, anti-abortion, OPEC. All these things are issues that have to be faced so he's going to start saying 'em. You'll see it by the next annual get-together. There's big plans in the wind but we'll leave that go for right now.

How many of the Revell Ratfinks were produced?

OK, now, on a royalty basis, with one cent per kit in 1963, I made $32,000. So you figure out how many kits were sold. They were manufactured until 1969 when they found out I was riding with outlaw motorcyclists. Ratfink always sold best. We sold three million kits



the biggest year.

What did you think of the Tom Wolfe piece on you?

That guy's super. He sat around and he twiddled his thumbs and he told me some funny jokes and then he goes and writes the story exactly as I told him. Wolfe never distorted anything—he didn't put anything in it that wasn't there. Some guys just like to build up something that people will read, but this guy did it with the language.

I loved it. I mean, the guy is far out, too. Tom Wolfe wears suits, you know, so that me with my dirty pants, we're walking downtown together and nobody looks at me. They're all looking at Tom Wolfe's pink suit. That was great. Plus, he's a really intelligent guy.

What effect did his article have on your life?

It made me be able to go to a Madison Avenue outfit like Chevy and say, "I want three engines and here's who I am. Check it out." See, I don't even have to carry the book around because it was the country's best seller. All of a sudden I'm a character of the country. So I says, "Look. Check out the story. Give me the engines." The next thing I know is, "Go pick up the engines at three o'clock Monday morning." So, it did that for me, where I had a little authority to call people and say, "What have you got?" "Who are you?" They ask—I tell them—and "We can get it for you through our PR deal."

Nationally, it put me into the circle with Muhammad Ali and those kind of guys because it was part of the same book, the people who were in that book. And they were accepted as legitimate people. Whereas before, I had to try and build up this crazy image. It takes a lot in the hot rod circle to break through. The whole country was not into hot rodding in the fifties. They were into hot rodding in the thirties. It took them ten or fifteen years to start doing the same thing back there. What we were doing out here on the West Coast was something entirely brand new.

Tell me about that first custom car show in 1948.

Oh, yeah, I remember that—they had the armory full of nice cars, but on the outside comes this guy in a 1948 Ford, brand new, and he had a big engine in it with the aluminum heads and the dual-intake manifold and the pizazzy stuff, all chrome-plated. He had two radiators, one in each fender. And it was on the outside! The best car at the show was on the outside.

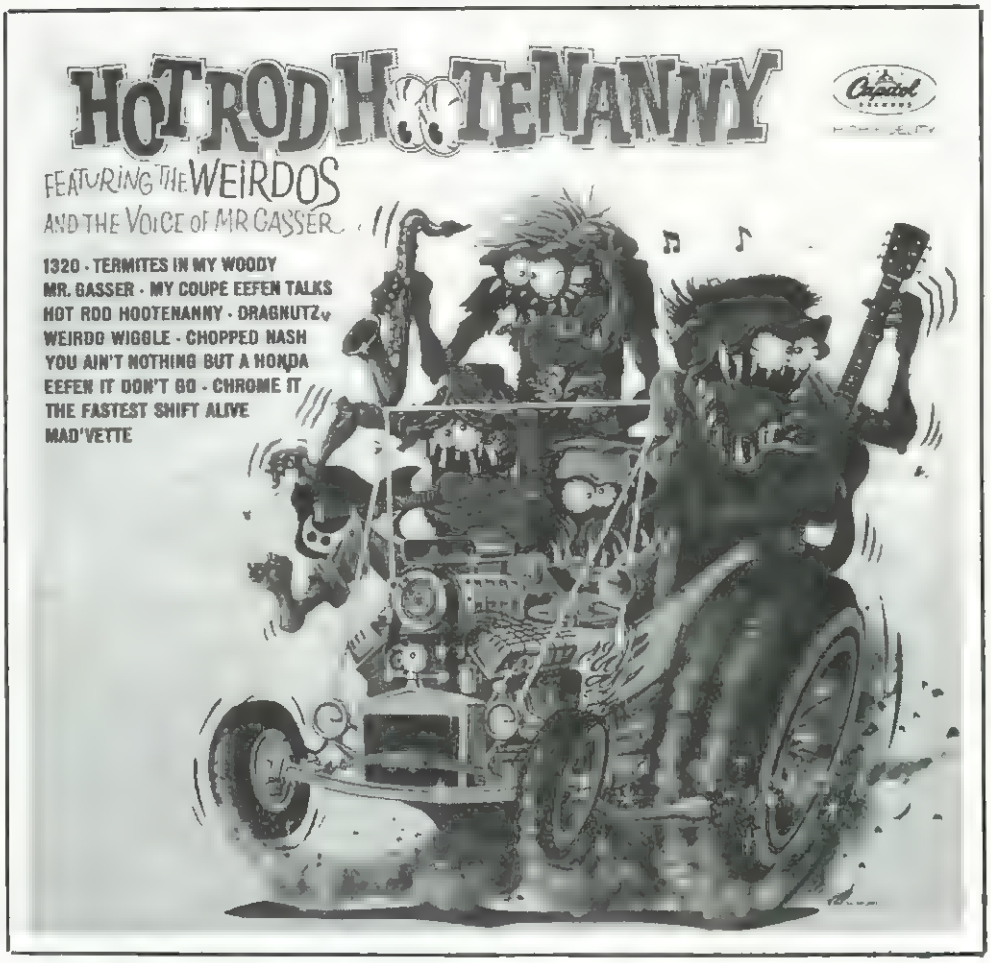
You were in high school at the time?

Yeah, getting ready to graduate from high school. But, see, that wasn't the first show. We had already been having them in the schoolyard after school and Saturdays, so that was nothing new. The difference was that you had to pay to get in, so we could see the guys from Sepulveda, what they were doing. They wouldn't come down to Bell so we paid our dollar and went in to see what they had.

Do you think the film "American Graffiti" is an accurate reflection of the fifties California hot rod scene?

It was G-rated, wasn't it? Yeah, I think it is

One of three Capitol albums from the middle 1960s featuring Roth Studios monster characters.


HOT ROD HOOTENANNY
Capitol
FEATURING THE WEIRDOS
AND THE VOICE OF MR GASSER
1320 - TERMITES IN MY WOODY
MR. GASSER - MY COUPE EEFEN TALKS
HOT ROD HOOTENANNY - DRAGNUTZ
WEIRDO WIGGLE - CHOPPED HASH
YOU AIN'T NOTHING BUT A HONDA
EEFEN IT DON'T GO - CHROME IT
THE FASTEST SHIFT ALIVE
MAD'VETTE

Roth Studios t-shirt designs from a full page ad that ran in car magazines circa 1965-70

accurate. Because nowadays they put a lot of stuff about the fifties that is not true. They didn't have a lot of violence and sexual attitudes in those days.

What kind of projects did you work on in the seventies?

I worked on three-wheelers. I got a patent on these three-wheelers. I got a patent on these three-wheelers to ride below the axle. That was my big thing then. I proved it worked and then went on to something else. That's when I started getting the idea for the sunpower stuff.

What kind of car do you see for the nineties?

Those Honda 600's that Japan made ten years ago. That's what's going to be happening in the nineties. They kicked 'em out of here because they were too small. But that's what we'll all be driving. People are getting away from hauling their families around. They've got to go to work twenty or thirty miles. So, we need two-passenger cars that get a hundred miles to the gallon or run on the sun with two hundred miles a gallon. You may get the whole family into a big cruiser. But you don't start it up every day. You start it up on Sunday.

Is that suit you were wearing at the Ratfink Revival the same suit you bought when Revell told you to clean up your image?

That's the one, the original one. It's about ready to fall apart now.

When did your Monster Coloring Book come out?

In 1965. I printed about ten thousand of 'em and got rid of 'em pretty fast.

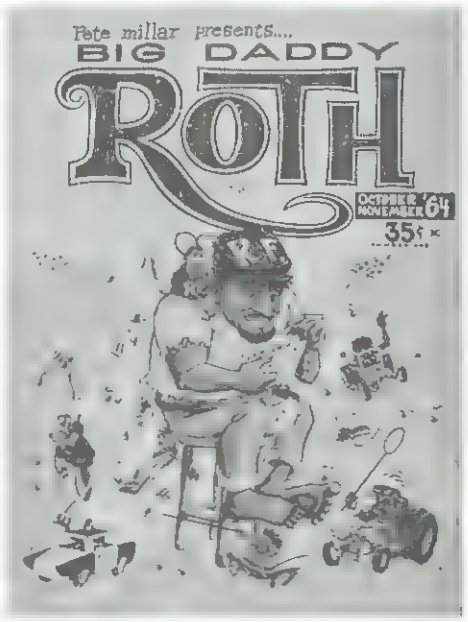
Why do kids like monsters, Ed?

Kids like monsters, they like the punk bands, they like the rock 'n' roll bands for one reason. As we go through our time it will get worse. What's a kid looking for? A mother and a father. How many kids have a mother and father today? Maybe fifty percent? So what do they replace the mother and father with? It's Devo. They put Devo on, or Rod Stewart, or Mick Jagger or somebody, and here's dad. He's telling me what I want to hear. He's loving me because he's talking about my problems. Now, as more and more divorces go on, the bands get more popular because they love the kid. They're replacing his family. Glenn Miller, to me, was like my dad because my dad wasn't home a lot. So Glenn Miller became my dad.

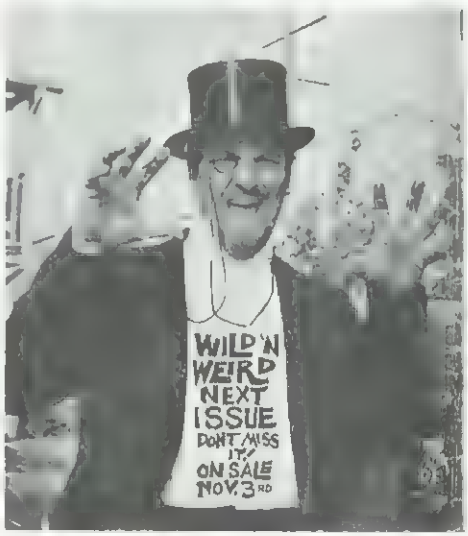
Where do you get your ideas for your monster creations?

The idea for the monster comes from what you want to sell. If you say, "Chevies eat worms," just think about it—you get a picture of this Chevy standing on its rear wheels with a bunch of worms coming out of its mouth and the poor salesman is standing there with an empty wallet. So you draw all this. You draw truth. And the way you learn truth, you go out and you crawl in the back of a body shop, talk to the body shop guy and say, "What's the guy up front doing?" "Oh, man he's hollering because he's not selling any big Chevies. They been selling Chevettes but they only make $200 apiece on 'em so they try to put people in a bigger car and make $1,200."

Big Daddy airbrushes a t-shirt at the eighth annual Rat Fink Reunion (December 1981) held at Kim & Ed's Custom Paint Shop in Fullerton, California.



Issue #1's front and back covers



So you get the true picture of what's happening from the worker, and then you can draw your pictures the way American life is. Then, you take a little trip to Tucson and you go on the freeway and you start counting. How many cars going where, what year? Two '78 Chevies. Five Datsuns. Two Mercedes. So, what's happening? The swing is toward foreign cars. That's the truth.

People don't buy my ideas because they're far out. Sometimes, I say to myself, "Yeah, they are too far out." But I can't sell a serious approach. I couldn't sell a Chevy at the Chevy dealer's. I'd like to be a Honda salesman. I could sell those things like crazy. But I can't sell Chevies. That's for some white-haired guy who sits down for three or four weeks and hopes somebody comes straggling in that's inherited some money and doesn't know how to spend it. With Honda dealers you know the guy wants a Honda. He's not going to buy a Chevy when he walks in there. So when I sell my artwork to these guys who are looking for the approach that appeals to today's teenagers, the real serious guys are not ready to use it yet.

So you're still doing custom pinstriping?

Yeah. Take down my phone number. It's 714 523-8676.

What would you charge to pinstripe a typewriter?

Typewriters go for $3.50. Belt buckles fifty cents. Bicycles fifty cents. Electric guitars $2.75—that includes the name. For a yacht I charge about $1,200.

You used to come out to the drag strip at Fontana didn't you?

Yeah. See, I went drag racing to find out what it was about. We had a car called Yellow Fang and we had it for about six months. I competed to find out what's going on enginewise, the politics of the drag strip and the politics of the pit area. I wanted to find out so I could do some artwork on it and be knowledgeable about it.

How long have you been with Knott's Berry Farm?

Six years. What Knott's lets me do is prove some theories I have about sales.

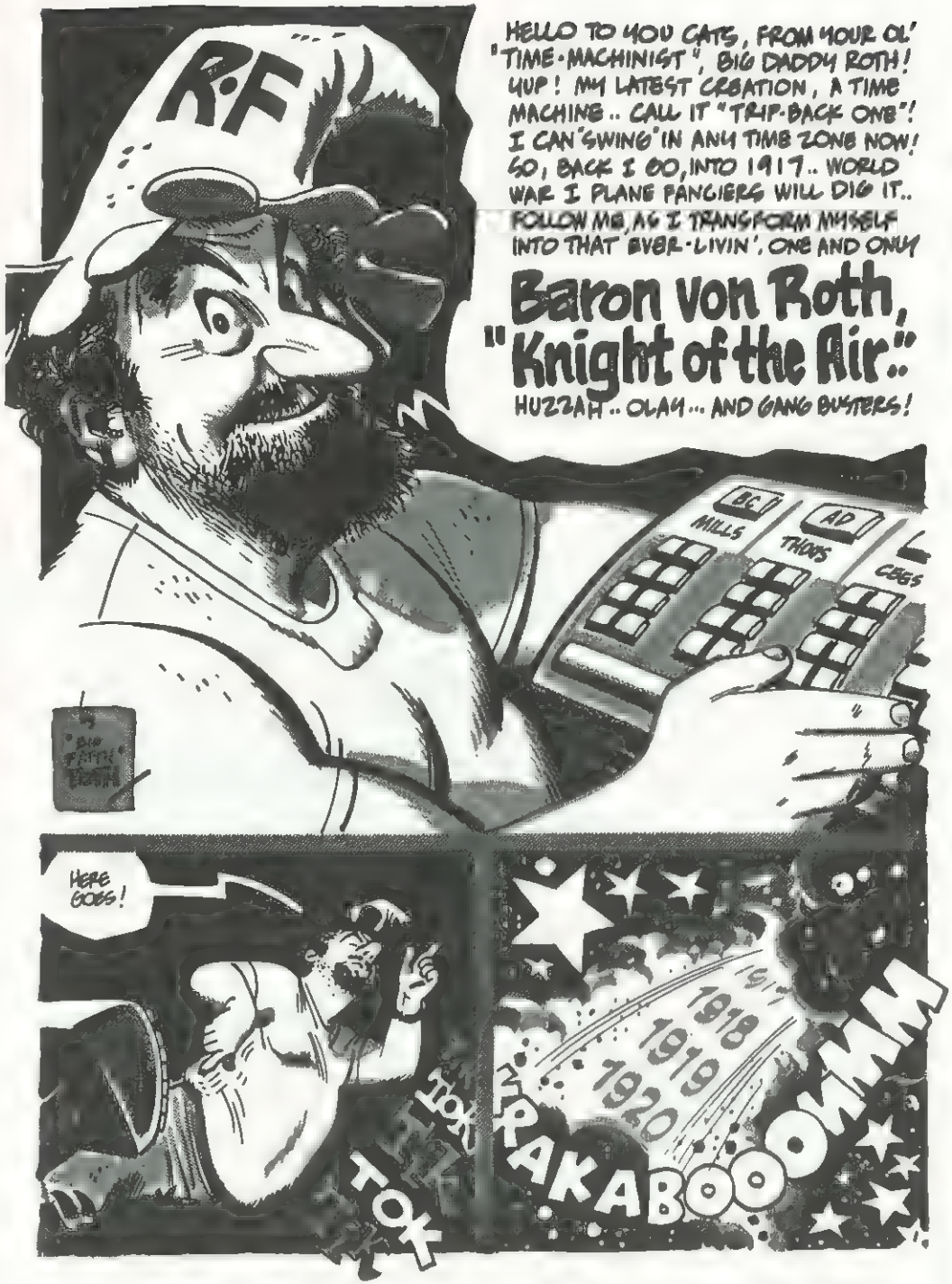
Are you pinstriping stagecoaches for Knott's?

Oh yes. I pinstripe everything. Every day I'm back in the eighteen-hundreds. Knott's Berry Farm is really a far out place because it's not normal to us any more.

Almost like science fiction?

It *is* science fiction. The cowboy is a science fiction guy right now. To me, anyhow. □

The comic book escapades of Big Daddy Roth appeared in four issues of his own magazine (published in 1965 by Pete Millar) and in several issues of Millar's **Drag CARtoons.** *Contributing writers and artists included Dennis Eliefson (today with Petersen Publications), Warren Tufts, Russ Manning and Alex Toth. Many of these adventures had little or nothing to do with cars, running the gamut of Big Daddy as superhero, cowboy, astronaut, lifeguard and the like. One such story is reprinted on the following three pages, written and drawn by Alex Toth for* **Drag CARtoons** *#22, December 1965.*


R·F
HELLO TO YOU CATS, FROM YOUR OL' "TIME-MACHINIST", BIG DADDY ROTH! YUP! MY LATEST CREATION, A TIME MACHINE.. CALL IT "TRIP-BACK ONE"! I CAN "SWING" IN ANY TIME ZONE NOW! SO, BACK I GO, INTO 1917.. WORLD WAR I PLANE PANCIERS WILL DIG IT.. FOLLOW ME, AS I TRANSFORM MYSELF INTO THAT EVER-LIVIN', ONE AND ONLY
Baron von Roth, "Knight of the Air."
HUZZAH.. OLAY... AND GANG BUSTERS!
MILLS
AD
THOMS
CEGS
HERE GOES!
TOK
TOK
1918
1919
1920
KRAKABOOOMMM

1917: A GRAY SEPTEMBER DAWN...
OOCH! WHERE AM I..?! MAN, IT'S COLD!
ZZZONNK
LOOKIT THEM OL' CRATES!! REAL BOSS... JUST LIKE IN THE FBVELL KITS...
ACHTUNG, ACHTUNG!!... YOU! UGLY SCHLEPPER MIT DER UGLY BEARD!
HMMNNHH?? UH-OHHH.. I'M ON THE WRONG SIDE!!! HEIL, DER KAISER! OY VAY!!!
WHO ARE YOU? VUN OFF DER NEW REPLACEMENTS? SCHPEAK OPP, UND GCHTANT AT ATTENTION!!
OHHYESSIRRR! YESSSIRRRR!! AHH, MEIN NAME ISS VON ROTH... FLUGLEUTNANT BARON VON ROTH!! KOFF! KOFF!
VON ROTH, HEIN? ZZOOO... NEVER HEARD OFF YOU... YOU UGLY BUMMER! GET TO YOUR MACHINE - VE PATROL DER SOMME VALLEY TODAY... MARSCH!!
YESSIRR!! YESSIRR!! YESSIRRR!!
UND ZZOOO...
I-I DON'T KNOW HOW TO FLY... BUT I GOTTA T-TRY! GREEEFF!

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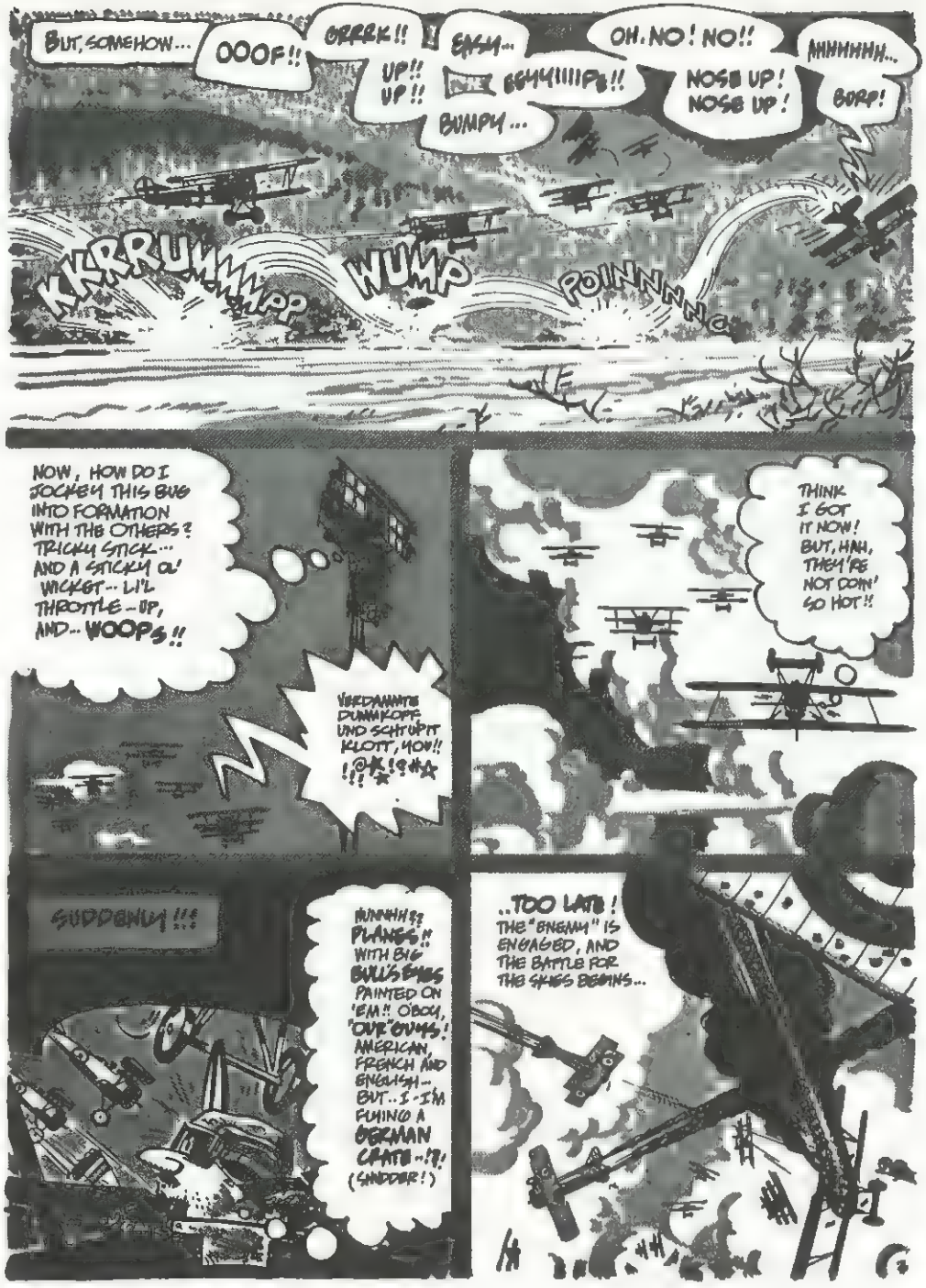

BUT, SOMEHOW...
OOOF!!
ORRRK!!
UP!! UP!!
EASY...
BUMPY...
EGGHHHHPS!!
OH, NO! NO!!
NOSE UP! NOSE UP!
MHHHHH...
BORP!
KRRUMMMPP
WUMP
POINNNNG
NOW, HOW DO I JOCKEY THIS BUS INTO FORMATION WITH THE OTHERS? TRICKY STICK... AND A STICKY OL' WICKET -- LI'L THROTTLE -- UP, AND -- WOOPS!!
VERDAMMTE DUMMKOPFE UND SCHTUPIT KLOTT, HOV!! !@#!?#☆
THINK I GOT IT NOW! BUT, HAH, THEY'RE NOT DOIN' SO HOT!!
SUDDENLY!!!
HMMMH?! PLANES!! WITH BIG BULL'S EYES PAINTED ON 'EM!! OBOY, "OVER OVUS"! AMERICAN, FRENCH AND ENGLISH -- BUT.. I-I'M FLYING A GERMAN CRATE -- !?! (SHUDDER!)
..TOO LATE! THE "ENEMY" IS ENGAGED, AND THE BATTLE FOR THE SKIES BEGINS...

POK-A POK-A POK-A POK-A
?
MAN, WHAT'LL I DO?! WHO DO I SHOOT AT ??!! ECHHHHH, DECISIONS, DECISIONS! WOOOPS, MISSED ME -!! (GASP!)
SCRR
ZIZZZ
GOTTA DOPE OUT THESE GUNS, QUICK! I'M BEIN' SHOT AT, CHARLEY!!!
AHH-THAT'S IT! AND AWAYYYYY WE GO!!
BRAK-TAKA-TAKA-TAKA-TAKA-TAKA-
DU LIEBE GÖTT IN HIMMEL!! DOT VON ROTH VAS SHOOTING AT VAS!! HE MUST BE A SCHPY!! @#!! #?!
GOT ONE!
GOT TWO!
AND A RAT-TAT-TAT FOR YOU!
I SCHMECK YOU DOWN, YOU @#!!! SCHNAKE!!

COO, THAT JERRY CHAPPY'S "PLINKED" TWO OF HIS OWN RUDDY FLIGHT! HAWWW! MUST'VE TIPPLED TOO MUCH BALLY SCHNAPPS! EGAD! ANOTHER ONE... HIS FLIGHT LEADER'S ON HIS TAIL NOW — GOING TO SHOOT HIM DOWN!

YOU BEARDED BUMMER, YOU! I FIX YOU NOW FOR BEING AN ENGLISCHER GLHPH...! I HAFF YOU IN DER SIGHTS..

BUT, OL' BIG D SEES HIS FLIGHT LEADER'S ATTACK MANEUVER... AND TRIES TO EVADE AND ESCAPE HIM!...

NASTY, NASTY!

@!! DONNERVETTER!!

BUT, TOO LATE, THE TWO FOKKERS CRASH INTO EACH OTHER!! LOCKED INTO A FALLING, FLAMING MASS...

KARRRAMMM!!

SEEING THEIR LEADER FALL, THE FEW REMAINING GERMANS MAKE FOR HOME...

YIPE! TIME MACHINE, TIME MACHINE, TAKE ME BACK TO 1964.. FAST!!!

LATER, A LONE FRENCH SPAD RETURNS TO THE CRASH SCENE, DIPS HIS WINGS IN TOKEN SALUTE TO BARON VON ROTH AND HIS FLIGHT LEADER... DROPPING A BOUQUET OF FLOWERS AS TRIBUTE!...

5

1914 1917 1927 1930 1947 1953 1959 1961

BOY-OH-BOY-OH-BOY, AM I GLAD TO BE BACK AGAIN! FROM NOW ON, I'LL STICK TO WHEELS, MAN! BUT, THOSE BOYS REALLY FLEW 'EM, DIDN'T THEY? "KNIGHTS OF THE AIR", WHO RESPECTED FELLOW PILOTS, EVEN THEIR ENEMY...

BUT, IT'S HISTORY, NOW.. SO, LET'S GET ON TO...! WHUZZAT? A PLANE FLYIN' OVER... LOW, TOO!...

RRRRRR

WHAT THE..?!

?!!

Fanfare FORUM

Jim Vadeboncoeur
3809 Laguna Avenue
Palo Alto, California 94306

How does one go about finding the name of a comic book artist who only worked from 1942 to 1955, was never credited, and never signed his work? For six years Hames Ware and I have studied the work of a particular artist who falls into this category. We've examined his panels under magnifying glasses, searching in vain for hidden signatures. We have asked countless of his contemporaries if they can place a name to the style, also in vain. We turn now to FANFARE readers in hopes that one of you may recognize this style and add the artist's name to the lexicon of comic art contributors.

This mystery artist has a very distinctive style. His work is characterized by a blend of near-photographic realism and slightly exaggerated cartoony roundness to his characters. The man (Burt Frohman remembers that he was male, but can't put a name to him) does excellent layout and perspective. His stories read and flow well, augmented by attention to detail which heightens the realism of his style. Yet his people are drawn in a manner that is most fitting for comics--accentuated action, that roundness so characteristic of cartoons, and slightly exaggerated body positioning.

While he was working as early as 1942 ("Lando" in WORLD'S FINEST #6), his style is best studied at Hillman in the late '40s and early '50s. He worked in crime and western titles primarily (REAL CLUE, WESTERN FIGHTERS, etc.) but he also did series characters in Hillman's FROGMAN and PIRATES. He could also be found at Ziff Davis doing an occasional G.I. JOE strip, at Orbit on crime and romance, and finishing out his career at ACG doing science fiction in 1955. The bulk of his work was done between 1949-54, a period much documented by comic historians. There must be someone reading this who can attach a name to the style. He worked in the same comics as John Prentice, Bill Ely, Mike Roy, Gerald McCann, Ogden Whitney, Henry Sharp and Bernie Krigstein, to name a few. He certainly deserves the recognition as much as his contemporaries.

If you know this man, please send his name directly to me.

Hames and I have a few more mystery artists that also need identifying. We could do an artist an issue for several years — like who are the St. John artists who preceded Matt Baker on many strips in AUTHENTIC POLICE CASES? Who drew all those ACE strips with Lou Cameron and later went on to draw GUNSMOKE for Dell? And so on and on.

These people were not just unimportant hacks who dabbled in comics, but major contributors to the medium. They deserve recognition for their efforts despite their self-imposed (in many cases) anonymity. It's up to us who care to dig out the names in any way we can. FANFARE would be a great forum for gathering more info. I hope this first segment proves successful and of enough interest to your readers to warrant future installments.

THEN YOU MUST BE MY GUEST HERE! I MISS THE COMPANY OF MEN OF RANK AND CULTURE!
DELIGHTED, MY FRIEND!
I HOPE THE FOOL DOESN'T REMEMBER WE NEVER DID MEET BEFORE!
LAGRANGE'S STAY IN CALIXO IS LONG AND PLEASANT...
I AM CURIOUS PHILIPPE! WHY DO YOU CALL YOUR SERVANT, NAPOLEON?
HA! HA! A LITTLE JOKE! IT REMINDS ME THAT THE GREAT MAY BECOME HUMBLE AND THE HUMBLE GREAT WITH LUCK!
A SAGE THOUGHT PHILIPPE... BUT FOR POWER WE MUST NOT FORSAKE DUTY... HONOR...
OF COURSE! BUT THESE PEASANTS RESPECT ONLY POWER! GIVE THEM TOO MUCH AND YOU COURT DISASTER... AS IN MY COUNTRY!
PERHAPS! BUT I BELIEVE KINDNESS AND HONESTY WILL WORK BETTER! IF I AM TEMPTED, THE WHITE DOVE REMINDS ME I MUST HOLD TO MY IDEAS!
OH, YES! I HAVE HEARD OF THE FAITH THE PEOPLE PLACE IN THIS DOVE...
IT IS GOOD BUT I GROW OLD! MY DUTIES INCREASE AND I COULD USE HELP IN GOVERNING...
NATURALLY A MAN OF ABILITY, RANK, AND CHARACTER... A MAN LIKE YOURSELF, MARQUIS! WOULD YOU CONSIDER...?
DEAR OLD FRIEND! DELIGHTED! CALIXO IS MY HOME NOW!

Sample of the mystery artist's work from "The Fingering Dove" in REAL CLUE CRIME STORIES, April 1953 (Hillman Periodicals).

Paul Leiffer
1815 Garland
Longview, Texas 75602

Thanks for your interest in THE CHRONOLOGICAL COMIC STRIP LISTING. I'll be typing up the whole works soon, an estimated manuscript length of 80 pages. It starts in the early 1920s, since that's when EDITOR AND PUBLISHER began annual listings and we (myself and co-researcher Hames Ware) have gone through every directory since then. Enclosed are some of our major remaining unanswered questions. Anyone with information on the following can write directly to me at the above address.

1) Who was "Jonwan" on the CAPTAIN MIDNIGHT strip? Tom Kendrick?

2) Who wrote PERRY MASON for King Features Syndicate?

3) Who were known assistants on POGO (besides G. Ward), GIL THORP, RICK O'SHAY, THE PHANTOM, APARTMENT 3-G?

4) Don Moore, 1950s writer on FLASH GORDON -- was this a pseudonym?

5) On what strips did these artists ghost or assist: Ray Osrin, Frank Drake, Dick Rogers, Leonard Starr.

6) Need any or full biographical details for: Royal "King" Cole (WINNIE WINKLE), Al Bare (DIXIE DUGAN), Nick Nichols (PETER PEN), Phil Boyle (JOE PALOOKA), Chuck Thurston (PEGGY), Joe Schieber (DRAGNET), Tom McKimson (ROY ROGERS).

Larry Charet
Chicago, Illinois

Some corrections and comments on Art Scott's Charles Biro piece in #4:

1) Scott claims that the last Gleason books have Biro listed as publisher and editor. BOY #118, the final issue, and all previous issues, have him listed as editor.

2) The Iron Jaw - Crimebuster encounters started in #60 but ended in #86, not a year after they started. And the three-stories-per-issue format began with #72, the first 32-page issue, not in #60.

3) Iron Jaw was not a comic heavy in the "Sniffer" series until after his battles with Crimebuster in #86. His last appearance previous to #60 was in #30 in a recreation of CB's origin.

While I greatly appreciate the stories in Biro's 1946-50 period and have many of them in my collection, I think Art dismissed the post-1950 Crimebuster stories too fast.

In #60 an editorial decision was reached to "modernize" CB and bring back his wartime nemesis Iron Jaw. Biro removed CB's hockey uniform and made him the active hero in the stories, working with District Attorney Loover. While not the same type of morality plays Biro was producing previously, these stories are still extremely entertaining.

The Iron Jaw stanzas were obviously very popular with readers also. I. J. appeared in #s 60-62 and #68 & 69 and then returned in every issue from #72-86, excepting #84. I. J. gradually changed from a monstrous brute to a cunning master spy to a comic buffoon constantly taunted by the equally comic Sniffer. These stories offered non-stop action, usual clever Biro dialog and some of the most interesting plot twists ever seen.

In the final "serious" appearance of I.J. in #86, Biro crammed the Crimebuster story with every turn imaginable. In #80 Biro had introduced the Vacuum, a Marvel-type villain who used a portable suction device in his robberies. The Vacuum continued in a series of stories and in #86, after losing his device, he searches for Iron Jaw to help him find

it. By the end of the story, I.J., Vacuum, Sniffer and his dozen and Crimebuster are all after it. Biro could compete with anybody in scripting just plain "entertainment." Not everything has to have a message!

I would also argue Art's evaluation of the art on these stories. I also admire Maurer's work, but I'd hardly call William Overgard a "less talented hand." His art and that of Hy Mankin on I.J. was as good as Maurer, in my opinion.

After #86 I tend to agree with Art that BOY went downhill, with Crimebuster and the later Chuck Chandler stories being mediocre. However, the Rocky X Claw series in #s 89-92 by Biro, Maurer and Ken Landau is something not to be overlooked.

Charles Biro was one of the most talented comic book writers, whether he was doing his dramatic crime stories or just plain "fun" adventure stories.

Will Gould
North Hollywood, California

The item about Slim Gaillard in #3 brought back memories. Wally Green's father Bud, the late Harry Warren's first collaborator, and his uncle Mac published some of Gaillard's songs (Green Bros. & Knight). One not mentioned in FANFARE was really wild -- "Vol Vist Du Gaily Star." Make what you can with that one.

During World War II, I was stationed at Fort MacArthur. So was Slim Gaillard. Rudy Vallee and his all-Navy band came to entertain. But there was no way he could compete with Slim, who got encore after encore. Reportedly he could also speak Arabic -- but I wouldn't bet on it.

There was a time after your GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE edition on me, after I injured a nerve in my ankle, that I had many falls. Involuntarily. One materialized into a hernia. I had surgery under a local anesthetic. After I recuperated, I reported back to the surgeon for a checkup. He told me I had given him a bad time. I wondered why. What is that serious? He said it could have been because I had him and his assistant laughing while using the scalpel. I didn't get it. Seriously he asked what the hell line followed "Flatfoot Floogie With A Floy Floy." I hated the song. But the surgeon said I'd kept repeating it while I was anesthetized.

Anyhow...Slim got a plug.

Just finished Richard Layman's book on Dashiell Hammett. With all his research he still managed some inaccuracies. Perhaps that's the way to write biographies. In my own book, A LITTLE GOULD DUST, I wrote only about people with whom I associated.

Example: He writes that Hammett in 1934 lived at a hotel called The Elysee. (Something like that.) When I met Hammett in '34 he lived at The Lombardy. No big deal. But what really grabbed me was that "Hammett liked to watch fights at the Winter Garden." The Winter Garden was a movie house when Warner Bros. took over. Al Jolson used to give Sunday concerts there for vaudevillians who weren't able to catch him on tour. Hammett did watch fights. As I wrote before, he loved to discuss fights with me. Although I was drawing RED BARRY, I still had my Boxing Writers Association pass. I took Hammett to prizefights, but not at the "Winter Garden." It was at Madison Square Garden!

● *Wally Green, son of Tin Pan Alley lyricist Bud Green ("Sentimental Journey") is executive editor of the Whitman Comics line (Disney, Warner Brothers, Lantz, Little Lulu, Popeye, etc.) at Western Publishing Company in New York.*

FANFARE, in its previous incarnation as GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE, devoted an entire issue to RED BARRY creator Will Gould. That issue (#11, 1970) brought many letters of response from RED BARRY fans and newspaper strip collectors, most of which were published in #13 (1971). A letter that never appeared in print, however, was one sent directly to Will himself three years later from novelist Max Allan Collins, who also now writes the DICK TRACY newspaper strip. By way of giving some background on RED BARRY for those who may not be familiar with the 1930s strip, and for those unfortunate enough to have missed GSM #11, we herewith run Max's letter to Will Gould:

Max Allan Collins
Muscatine, Iowa (May 21, 1974)

Morris Weiss and I have been discussing (through the mails, mostly, and occasional long distance calls) various artists in comics whose work we admire, and invariably the name Will Gould comes up. Morris finally admitted that he has had some correspondence with you, and I coaxed your address out of him. But don't hold that against him -- he can't help being a nice guy.

So I'm here, "in person," to express my admiration for Red Barry and Will Gould. And I hope you don't mind the intrusion.

I'm 26, a writer (have sold eight "tough guy" crime/mystery novels to paperback publishers in the past two years), teacher (half-time at the local community college: English, journalism, creative writing), and a longtime comics fan. Obviously I'm not old enough to have run into Red Barry the first time around. My initial contact with your work was through two Big Little Books--which happen to be the best Big Little Books I've ever run across, especially the first one with its Dillingeresque villain (Donniger) and breakneck pace. Most BLBs are unreadable, but these two are actually first rate, thanks to the solid material they were taken from.

I really found out what Red Barry was all about through the GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE interview. That is the best interview of any kind I have ever read. And a beautifully put-together magazine, too. It was already out of print when I discovered it, but I managed to find an extra copy (besides my own, that is) to send to my friend mystery writer Donald E. Westlake. Don is the author of such books-into-film as POINT BLANK, THE BUSY BODY, THE HOT ROCK, COPS AND ROBBERS, THE OUTFIT, BANK SHOT etc. He is a great Hammett fan, as am I, and I knew he would love to have a copy of this interview with all its insights into Hammett and that whole era and, of course, RED BARRY, the "other" SECRET AGENT X-9 strip.

Westlake might not agree with me, but I have always felt RED BARRY was the better strip. Not that X-9 isn't a classic. With Hammett's first rate script and Raymond's pulp-style illustration, X-9 is like BLACK MASK magazine had come to life on the funny pages.

But RED BARRY is the definitive detective strip. I love Dick Tracy, but Chester Gould's universe is his own, and has little to do with the BLACK MASK world of the '30s. Gould came into his own in the early '40s, with his bizarre characters such as Flattop and the Brow. His '30s gangsters were nowhere near as exciting.

On the other hand, Red Barry's foes were right out of the headlines -- gangsters clearly patterned after the real thing, with their tough underworld jargon and constant five o'clock shadow.

And speaking of shadows, that's a Will Gould trademark, isn't it? The sinister mood created by those long, boldly-inked shadows; the ever present undercurrent of violence created by the strip's very technique; even the jagged speech balloons created an atmosphere of fast moving violence.

I don't think there was as much violence in RED BARRY as in DICK TRACK and other action strips of the era, although there seemed to be. The technique, the bold brush strokes, the shadows, the expressive dialogue balloons, the incredible speed you could create in any scene, even one consisting of people just standing around talking -- everything evoked a mood of imminent violence, impending danger. And when a story does explode into actual violence, the impact is all the greater. That's what RED BARRY has that X-9 lacks, oddly enough, as it's the very technique Hammett himself was best at. Look at THE MALTESE FALCON, which has very little real action. It's largely a series of dialogues taking place in hotel rooms and apartments -- yet it's the most exciting, best tough-guy mystery novel ever.

I only wish RED BARRY were collected in permanant hardcover editions. Although widely recognized among comic art buffs as one of the greatest classic strips, RED BARRY is to much of the general public a forgotten strip, unfortunately. A nice hardcover collection or two would remind the public of this '30s star. I am, of course, grateful for the Italian English-language edition of the "Mystery of the Song of the Flame." However, more volumes were promised. Have any materialized?

Thank you for listening, and thank you for RED BARRY -- the best detective strip of 'em all.

Bhob Stewart
Somerville, Massachusetts

COVER: Logo looks very visible. Huckleberry Hound makes a nice poster effect, even if I hate the character. But the yellow & white side strip lettering is best. Looks obsessive. You could easily have slipped the Cars record jacket in there as an insert.

Tod Slaughter is a subject that has always fascinated me, even though I've seen only one Slaughter film. I think you threw away a good article here. With text this short you could have added a few more stills and made a three-pager.

VOGUE: Here, too, I would like to have seen a longer article--with a color Vogue record on the back cover--using all available Vogue records.
SUCCESS STORY: Excellent, but

left wondering -- was it the Liquid Paper that killed her? ORIGIN STORY: Total waste of space. However, the whole story of C.W. Post -- from his early efforts to circulate mass health foods up to C.W. Post College in 1981 -- is actually quite interesting. MAMIE: Nice photo contrast. This article is a little unfair, especially if seen in the context of Van Doren's interview with Rona Barrett in June of '81. Her real personality is natural and unaffected, quite different from her studio-created Fifties image.

L.A. ARCHITECTURE: Carthay photo could have mentioned that this was THE HEIRESS premiere for those who can't identify. Article and pictures work well together throughout. What does the Ben-Hur Coffee Pot have to do with Ben-Hur? The Ben-Hur Bar, opened in NYC as an intermission bar when the 1959 movie was released, stayed in that location almost a decade after the film vanished. Walls were decorated with armor, shields, etc. Often I was the only customer because, in their desperation to attract customers (who seldom came) they installed a Scopitone machine.

CAIN: Why does Fine get only an initial byline? This, once again, is an article that could easily have been four or five pages, with so much picture material available. Would have preferred to see this illustrated with a paperback jacket for every Cain title ever published.

HUCK: Opening layouts are excellent. Rough quality of model sheets is good, and I like the way they're arranged on page 16. However, if this was intended as "persuasive writing," Cawley hasn't succeeded with me. H-B stuff is trash. I frankly don't think anyone could write an article proving otherwise. Try reading the names of those Quick Draw McGraw characters out loud and you'll wonder if you haven't gone hebephrenic.

3D: There were a number of unusual turn-of-the-century stereo cards you could have used instead. Some were entire stories involving sets, props and actors. I've seen one that utilized six captioned cards with a cast of four. The article seems to cover a lot very fast. 13 GHOSTS is mentioned even though it wasn't 3D, and yet there is no mention of the supposedly superior Russian Stereo 70 polaroid process of the late Seventies. I think you should have saved this article until you could have done a 3D insert section.

INSERT: Full color cover is great despite the trim on lettering at top and the smudges at bottom left. Interior layout is whammo throughout. The only thing that bothers me is that there are some excellent drawings here -- which I never saw -- which would have caused me to revise my comment about "mediocre" work (even though I was really only referring to his pre-EC comics). Like the way you retained some of the original type. The back cover ad ("A Man's Pastime") is the first time anyone has done this, I believe -- reprinted such an ad in full color.

GEERDES: These pages leap right out. Problem is that I have never heard of any of the artists and wish there had been some kind of spread boxing off artists' photos with their work.

VARGAS: Have you thrown away something great here? Why not title it "Vargas Meets The Cars"? There's almost enough text about the Cars to justify it. Should have used more pages. Back cover is wonderful except for the big dot pattern.

SUMMATION: I like the crowded look. But, on the other hand, it seems you could spread out. The articles have a squeezed effect.

On the whole I think the issue is a helluva answer to the things Art Scott and Landon Chesney complain about. Except for Fred Patten's animation article, #4 is much improvement contentwise over the first three issues.

Chesney's observations on narrative structures in contemporary films (which he calls "half-assed plot development") have an antiquated ring, expressing a retrograde desire to cling to 19th century storytelling approaches. Reading Chesney one might be left with the impression that Welles had never shattered narrative structure into a "prismatic" film when he made CITIZEN KANE forty years ago.

Chesney's example, Antonioni's 1966 British film BLOW-UP is a curious choice. Actually, BLOW-UP, based on a Julio Cortazar short story, was a commercial success beyond the confines of art theaters, and Antonioni was criticized at the time (mainly by British critics) for allegedly selling out with a depiction of a mythical mod "swinging" London in order to attract a mass audience. ("One suspects Antonioni, like TIME magazine, has been deceived," said the British Film Institute's MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN.)

What Chesney calls "existential claptrap" and "unrelated rigamarole" is all directly related to Antonioni's continual themes of urban isolation, incommunicability and, as Jonas Mekas puts it, "the death of the human soul." And, specifically in BLOW-UP, to the story of a quest for purpose and meaning in the emptiness of contemporary experience.

Chesney's thoughts on "the lack of plotting and logical character motivation" don't accurately apply to Antonioni who does use elliptical and stripped-down plots but uses them as frameworks for intense character studies. (Antonioni: "I always try to manage so that each element of the image serves the narrative, serves to specify a particular psychological moment.") Often it is the behavior of an Antonioni character that determines the course of the plot, seemingly the case with Antonioni's controversial cinematic breakthrough, L'AVVENTURA in 1960. The linear and literal storyline films Chesney prefers sometimes rely on interior monologues heard in voice-over narrations as a device to explain to the audience the psychology underlying a character's behavior. Voiceover narration has been brilliantly employed as a device to introduce exposition or illuminate characters (in such films as BADLANDS, BAD COMPANY, SHADOW CATCHER and DAYS OF HEAVEN), but it remains a dramatic contrivance compared with Antonioni's attempts to show emotions and pivotal psychological moments only through the characters' behavior and his use of the camera.

The BLOW-UP sequence of successive blow-ups by the photographer Thomas (David Hemmings) wrings suspense from a solitary activity in a marvelously Hitchcockian manner -- since the audience discovers the gun and the corpse when Thomas does. The climax, with Thomas now no longer detached but sharing in the mimes' group experience by picking up their imaginary tennis ball (interpreted as a "cop-out" by Chesney and as "a man near the verge of insanity" by critic Robin Wood), is an ironic echo of the previous night's events (the vanished corpse, the vanished photos), affirming Thomas' new-found understanding of himself and his perception of the world around him.

Chesney's description of the photo-enlargement gimmick at the climax of CALL NORTHSIDE 777 differs from the following in Foster Hirsch's THE DARK SIDE OF THE SCREEN:

"The case is decided by the date on a newspaper which appears in the rear of a photograph taken at the time of Frank's arrest. Both Frank and Wanda are in the picture as they walk up the stairs of the police station. Wanda swore in court that she did not see Frank until December 23, the day she identified him in the line-up. If the newspaper is dated December 22, as the reporter suspects it might be, Wanda's credibility is suspect. The district attorney has agreed to reverse the judge's decision. The man's fate then rests on whether a new process of photographic enlargement is powerful enough to reveal the date of the newspaper."

Landon Chesney
Chattanooga, Tennessee

I'm not insisting on chronological plot development. If I did, neither THE KILLERS (1946 version) nor THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE would be among my favorite films. What I want is a narrative that is equal to the strength of the characters. And this includes a resolution of the various questions or problems posed by the plot. Learning Rosebud's identity, for instance, is certainly secondary to the real point that Welles was trying to make. You could delete the last minute or so of CITIZEN KANE and still come away knowing that Kane lived a sterile life. Antonioni would have posed the question but omitted the resolution. Welles chose to have it both ways. So do I.

THE KILLERS has always stuck in my mind since it was just about as perfect a film as I've ever seen. I may be wrong but I think the story was not only told in reverse order, but from several different points of view as well. It started with Burt Lancaster being bumped off for no perceptible reason. Edmund O'Brien unravels the plot by going back and interviewing Lancaster's former associates. Again, I think several incidents were repeated -- but differed in details depending on whose point of view, or recollection, was being shown. Not quite as flashy as Kubrick's starting-gate gimmick from THE KILLING, but more impressive overall because THE KILLERS had more narrative drive. The unorthodox devices were perfectly logical extensions of the plot.

I probably could go on at greater length in replying to Bhob's critique. Like his bringing in comments on voice-over narration completely out of left field. It's a convention, and sometimes conventions are interesting (or lend color) for their own sake. If this kind of exposition is absolutely necessary to understanding the story, however, I'd say there was something wrong with the story--or the way the characters were developed.

I'll let Bhob's follow-up observation on CALL NORTHSIDE 777 stand without elaborate comment. After all, he's obviously right. But my misremembering the detail doesn't alter the thrust of my original argument.

You've no doubt seen the newest title from Starlog, COMICS SCENE. The first issue had an

article on HEAVY METAL. One of the editors is quoted as saying she had to read a lot of the stories through three or four times before understanding what they were about. Which goes back to what I was talking about before. The lack, and evidently the lack of need, of coherent plotting.

I was sorry to hear about Wally Wood. I always felt his greatest potential was at EC, and he missed fulfilling most of what he was capable of outside that context. Excepting Davis, who has pretty much bent the ad game to his purposes, this seems to be mostly true of the rest of the EC gang.

Wood's later indifference might be attributed to lack of involvement. I mean, like, how do you follow EC? Ostensibly, he might have had more freedom with Tower -- but on the other hand there wasn't much he could contribute to the superhero genre, and I imagine he was pretty much locked into that format. His Alka-Seltzer ad harks back to the kind of thing he used to do for MAD. Too bad he couldn't have done more of that kind of work.

Bruce V. Kalnins
Vancouver, B. C. Canada

The Graham Ingels article/insert was fantastic -- Ingels being one of my favourite all-time comic book artists, if not my favourite horror artist (next to Berni Wrightson).

Second highlight of the issue for me was Clay Geerdes' piece on Newave Comix. In addition to having a personal interest in the field -- having corresponded not only with Clay but with a number of newwave comix folk in general, plus having worked with one or two of them -- I found Clay's perceptions regarding fandom's position vis-a-vis the major companies very astute. Namely that of operating as basically a clearing house for potential marketable talent. Needless to say, everybody's got to make a living, but the factory-style mode of creative production at Marvel and DC cannot be doubted. In short, we are dealing here with product. While I am very conscious of the economic imperatives involved in the situation -- forced to sell unspecified numbers of titles to unspecified number of preteenage boys (primary comic book buying market) in order to make any sort of a profit -- I feel that it is highly unfortunate that, as Clifford Neal (editor of DR. WIRTHAM'S COMIX & STORIES) has pointed out, that the comic book medium has become indelibly identified in the public's mind with juveniles. Publications such as HEAVY METAL and EPIC might change the situation, but I personally doubt it. It's ironic that the mythology of this very age is regarded as "junk" (to capsulate Jules Feiffer's thesis on the whole thing) by the majority of the population.

Ah, well. The will of the gods...or something like that.

Speaking of the gods, I found Thomas Egan's letter, in which he stated that "the occult is not a good influence for any filmmaker, or indeed any right-thinking individual" very strange. If this indeed is his position, then I am very glad to be most definitely a wrong-thinking individual.

Thomas Egan
Woodside, New York

As usual, FANFARE's mechanics of production are superb--layout, printing, graphic design in all its variety and clarity of photo reproduction --but I find some difficulty in getting interested in the esoteric convolutions of comics characters.

Vargas' are is sensual all right, but hardly an outstanding achievement -- sexist, in fact, though the back cover "Beauty and the Beast" has intriguing qualities. There is a type of mythic quality here, the typical blonde ideal of American male society playing with the beast-mask, gaudy and extravangantly crude and mindless. Beauty has the upper hand, but she already looks bored. So how long before she masks again -- until finally only the cosmetician will know her real truth. Beauty only skin-deep then?

In regard to Ray Zone's 3-D article, he neglected to mention Arch Oboler's achievements in the popular culture of storytelling in the 1940s & '50s. Who can forget the terrifying tales over the radio of horrors not of this earth, of reeking corridors of death and blood, and mosters of shadowy realms? Oboler was a master at this suspense atmosphere. His like far outshines the worthy efforts of E. G. Marshall and MYSTERY THEATER. How about a feature essay on Oboler and the terror narrators of radio?

The insert on Graham Ingels by Bhob Stewart was really outstanding, although I feel there have been far better artists of the fantastic and monstrous in the pulps than Ingels. I prefer the weirdly beautiful stipple style of Virgil Finlay (his 20-year efforts in WEIRD TALES) and carried on today by Canada's Gene Day, who works for Marvel among other publishers. But each to his own. A good format anyway, the pulp insert.

I only wish, too, that side

JIM JONES
744 Pomelo Drive
Vista, Calif. 92083

BILL!

FANFARE (4) ARRIVED! However DO YOU DO IT? Every issue is SO MUCH FUN to look at and read... issue after issue... AMAZING! SO MUCH! SO MUCH! SO MUCH! To adequately tell you all the things that I ENJOYED... I'd have to produce a 48 page mag to do it! WITH FULL COLOR COVERS... called SON OF FANFARE! And you ALWAYS come up with those inspired touches that make a GREAT mag even BETTER AND BETTER!!!

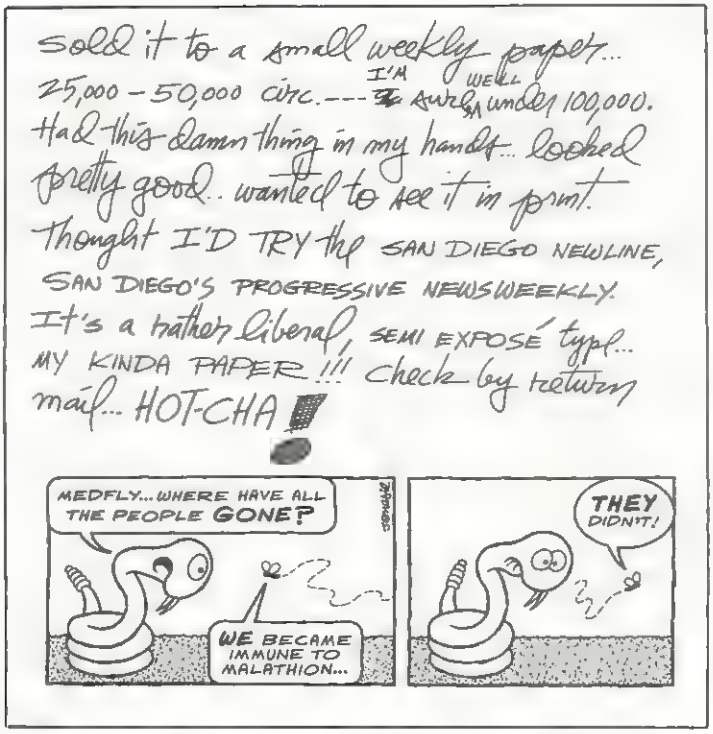
That INGELS insert with the full color cover... GENIUS! The ALBERTO VARGAS back cover, a BLOW-UP of a printed piece... the ENLARGEMENT gives the work an "other world," ethereal, 1930-40 POP-art look.

AND NOW... THE BAD NEWS.. my same old BITCH!!!! The CHARLES BIRO piece... you used 15 ¼ page reductions of the comic-book pages... I'd rather have seen 4... FOUR FULL PAGE representations. Enjoyed them all... BUT THE EYESTRAIN! Those CRANDALL pages (8) DAMN! I would'a rather seen 1 or 2 FULL PAGE... and seen... REALLY SEEN his FATASTIC TECHNIQUE! Oh, well, what the hell! YOU'VE HEARD ALL THIS BEFORE, from me!!!

Oh, what a shame for me to insert my "snake" into this verbal/visual GARDEN OF EDEN... all enclosed... reduced XEROX-TYPE copy!

For a long time, now... been waiting for someone to do editorial cartoons in the comic-strip format. YES... JERRY ROBINSON does it occasionally. but... mostly ONE PANEL stuff [ ]... strip shape.

Recent developments, here in California, brought this idea to mind. I GOT LUCKY!


Sold it to a small weekly paper... 25,000 - 50,000 circ.---I'M WELL aware it's under 100,000. Had this damn thing in my hands... looked pretty good.. wanted to see it in print. Thought I'D TRY the SAN DIEGO NEWLINE, SAN DIEGO'S PROGRESSIVE NEWSWEEKLY. It's a rather liberal, SEMI EXPOSÉ type... MY KINDA PAPER !!! Check by return mail... HOT-CHA
MEDFLY...WHERE HAVE ALL THE PEOPLE GONE?
WE BECAME IMMUNE TO MALATHION...
THEY DIDN'T!

by side with specials on underground comics, with their sick cult of anarchy and sexual fantasies with violence, you'd give some space to such as Hal Foster and his achievements in medieval-style historical fantasy via PRINCE VALIANT. Foster was one of the very few who avoided speech balloons which ruin so much art in comics. Foster's realism tries to capture the adventure and human grandeur that underlie the medieval & early barbarian cultures in the Age of King Arthur. He notes the cruelty, too, but his epic gives readers a feeling of hope with their fantasy. Prince Valiant, Queen Aleta of the Misty Isle, their fascinating children Arn, the girl twins, et al, are all real in their conflicts and beliefs in honor and the Christian ethic of social order mixed with the warrior ethos of the age. They speak in a way Flash Gordon, Terry and the Pirates, etc., never could.

Marty Pahls
San Francisco, California

FANFARE has certainly improved considerably from the first two issues. Of course, I am personally delighted with the emphasis on comics; both the Biro and the Ingels articles were well worthy of the GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE days. The Fiction House pulp insert idea was a dandy.

I enjoy the way you lay out the mag. Your almost throwaway use of sidebars, the little added graphics touches -- collagelike, but in sum it adds up to more than its parts. The message seems to be that there is a connecting geist among all these forms of pop culture -- at least the 1920s through 1950s, which is your period of interest and mine, too.

I was greatly attracted to Fine's "Los Angeles Architecture" article and commend to your readers the book CALIFORNIA CRAZY: ROADSIDE VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE by Jim Heimann and Rip Georges (Chronicle Books, 1980) from which a number of your illos were taken. This book is a vintage visual junk food pig-out of Zeppelin shaped diners, shoe shaped shoe shops, piano shaped music schools, plus tamales, watermelons and pumpkins you could walk into, and a view of Van de Kamp Bakeries' parking lot for its windmills.

The Vargas article reveals this man not only as the wonderful artist-for-all-seasons that he is, but as a gentleman of the first rank. And I fell for "Stereo Visions" like a ton of bricks, not only because it answered all my questions about the history of 3D, but because the kid who appeared on your logo photo looks so much like I did in that summer of 1953.

One aspect of Charles Biro's comics I found (and still find) off-putting: his insistence on undramatic layouts, static angles, talking heads, lack of action and variety, adding up to books that scan duller than they really are. This is the reverse side of the coin from Marvel, where sock-'em-out-of-the-panel slug fests on every page tries to cover up for lack of plot, characters, motivation, and, mainly, storytelling. For me, Gleason's editing and "documentary" approach pulled down the good artists he had (like Bob Fuji and Reed Crandall -- though I thought the Crandall story you reprinted was the best Biro comic art I'd seen). Contrast this editing approach with Kurtzman -- also a very opinionated editor, one who would draw a detailed layout and insist his artist follow it, but an editor with a strong sense of visual drama.

William J. Mason
Montreal, Quebec Canada

Brief comments on past FANFAREs:

A lot of stuff that's just not on the agenda for me, some very pleasant surprises (Abbott & Costello, Groucho) and plenty of stuff I like just fine. Beautiful production and editing. Given my own tastes and interests, I liked #4 the best. The reason I never wrote you on #1 was because I assumed, like Marty Pahls, that you ran the Noebel piece as some kind of grotesque joke. Anyone who just looked at the pictures would never have guessed what the article was about, and I wonder how Noebel himself feels about his Rock-n-Roll-is-the-Devil's-music stuff rubbing shoulders with EC and pinups.

I had the same reaction to the letters section of GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE #16 where you printed a letter from some flying saucer nut, didn't answer it, and then used "photographs" of flying saucers and comic book covers of same as spot illos for the entire letters column. As it happens, I do not believe in flying saucers (nor do I believe that rock-n-roll is the Devil's music), but that's not what irritated me. The real piss-off was that I couldn't tell whether or not you agreed with Noebel and the saucer guy, whether or not not you were putting on your readers or whether all of the above were true at the same time. But I expect the whole subject has lost its glow for you by now.

Bravo on everything in #4 except Clay Geerdes and his "newave" comix. I hope that printing the letter by Graham Ingels will have the effect of stopping, once and for all, any attempts to "find" Ingels and thrust him into the limelight. The man has a right to his privacy and should be left in peace. On the other hand, it was wonderful to see all that beautiful Fiction House artwork.

Great stuff on Charles Biro, 3D and Los Angeles Architecture. My wife used to eat at the Tail o' the Pup.

Philip Smith
San Diego, California

#4 was an excellent issue -- the best so far, if not as much in content as in format. All the loose ends are being ironed out, and it looks like this mag is here to stay.

The high point was Bhob Stewart's article on Ingels. EC fandom has so much untouched ground to cover, it's insane. Never have I seen an article on the ECs Max Gaines started. Once in a while someone mentions Moon Girl as a poor imitation of Wonder Woman, but rarely that. I'd like to see a long-time EC fan like Stewart write an article on those little known ECs like ANIMAL FABLES, TINY TOT, PICTURE STORIES FROM...(Science, World History, the Bible, U.S. History), DANDY, MODERN LOVE, etc. To my knowledge, no articles have appeared on these titles. Other topics: Feldstein's and Kamen's work for Fox; recent comics (and Warren stories from the '60s) by Craig; Kurtzman's HUMBUG.

I've never been a fan of Charles Biro's, but I found the article fascinating. It's a shame that comics no longer are simply good stories. Now they have to be believable, realistic and controversial to be acceptable by the serious fan. Biro was by no means a great writer, but he was a great storyteller.

The rest of the issue was first rate, but I think the cover illo of Huckleberry Hound might have misled some people. A Vargas oil would have served better. Don't underestimate your audience.

● *The problem FANFARE has with covers is that no matter what pictorial is chosen it's going to be misleading to some extent. If #4's Huck Hound cover made readers think the issue was a Hanna-Barbera special or a general animation mag, likewise a Vargas oil could have suggested an all-Vargas edition or a major article on the pin-up art field. With a multi-media format, and despite descriptive type blurbs on covers, this problem will probably always exist. To drop in an apropos if dire comment by Bhob Stewart:*

Most "general media" mags have flopped if aimed at a wide mass market: Hefner's SHOW BUSINESS ILLUSTRATED, PS (edited by Gahan Wilson), MEDIA PEOPLE, MORE, Magazine Management's NOSTALGIA ILLUSTRATED, AUDIENCE (designed by Milton Glaser). Why this is I don't know, but I have long suspected it's similar to the situation that existed with SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES' sampler format. Opera fans don't want to read an article about baseball and

jazz fans may or may not want to read an article about chess. Every issue in effect becomes a new one-shot issue, occasionally skimming some constant readers off of a large turnover audience.

● *As for an article on the ECs Max Gaines started in the '40s, FANFARE #6 will have Bhob's long feature on educational comics which includes much material on Gaines' earliest books, the PICTURE STORIES FROM... series. And as if that weren't enough, the issue will also have a Jack Kamen interview that covers his career from the aforementioned Fox comics (art produced during his tenure at the Iger shop), to EC in the '50s, to his most recent work for the Stephen King & George Romero film CREEPSHOW and its promotional comic book tie-in.*

Robert E. Butts
South Bend, Indiana

Okay, I'll bite. Sign me up for another four issues of FANFARE, notwithstanding the magazine's direction is away from most of my current interests. It's fair to say of me that I do not "find (fill in the blank) as meaningful a form of expression as say, Metamorpho or the Silver Surfer."

Perhaps because I'm no longer a hardcore fan of mass culture of any form that, like Bruce Dickson, I've come to consider the case of the hardcore fan--attempting to understand my personal likes and their reasons, and why my tastes changed over time. Dickson is absolutely right, I believe. The man who lives and breathes the NFL, taking great pains to watch every televised game, is afflicted with the same malady his wife suffers--wondering from one day to the next whether Luke Spencer and Laura Baldwin will find happiness on GENERAL HOSPITAL.

When speaking of other than mass culture genres, there are differences. The kind of "fanatical madness" that accompanies the work of Aleister Crowley is different from the mild obsession that possesses a 12 year old to own every issue of FANTASTIC FOUR. For that matter it's different from the "madness" of fundamentalist Christianity.

A hardcore fan is one whose behavior must be considered different from those who merely share his interest. Someone who pays to see major league baseball is a fan; someone who sings "Take Me Out To The Ballgame" to verses he's written is a hardcore fan. Someone who goes to movies is a fan. Someone who attends ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW more than once in costume (or maybe just once) is a hardcore fan.

In my attempt to isolate the elusive hardcore fan I have considered only behaviors, not emotions. What behaviors are considered is my subjective choice. I know of no objective criteria that would separate the hardcore fan from his more mundane fellow. There are as many kinds of hardcore fan as there are people, and all of us are no doubt on somebody's list.

I found a partial answer to Landon Chesney's question about plot development in the movies in a book about science fiction (prose variety), ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION. The author is talking about the "new wave" and its quality. On page 172 he writes:

"Much of the New Wave was unsuccessful. This was not because the work was obscure and difficult, because obscure and difficult writing can too easily be used to disguise a poverty of imagination or skill. The New Wave quickly developed a vocabulary of cliches, in particular the use of experimental typography to fill space, and an elliptical form of storytelling in which the burden of maintaining continuity was passed from the author to the reader."

Surely there is some truth here relevant to the present state of movies, too.

Speaking of "new wave," Clay Geerdes' assertions that comics publishers (attempted) "to control what was said in (fan) publications"..."kept artists anonymous so they couldn't gain a following"...(saw) "fandom as...a way of keeping young fans addicted to super heroism"...(doesn't pay company artists) "for free promo spots at cons"..."have taken comics away from people and made them a repetitious product and an expensive game"... and other assertions of the same nature say more about Clay Geerdes' paranoia than they do about the publishing houses. I am not competent to judge whether those ideas are representative sentiments of the new wave generally. If they are, I'll forego the new wave of comics. Geerdes mistakes freedom for license, and company standards for intellectual compromise. It appears that the intellectual underpinnings of his new wave are anti-establishment and/or nihilism. If so, it seems unlikely it could produce anything of lasting value.

Anthony F. Smith
Houston, Texas

Richard Kyle and Landon Chesney -- both were/are quite fine in their perceptions concerning comic art. Offhand I would also say they are complementary talents. Kyle's strength seems to be in analyzing the social and historical context of a given work or artist while Landon, as an artist, seems better at discussing the creative act itself.

One problem with columnists for THE COMICS JOURNAL and similar publications is the monthly schedule. They are rush-into print with what amounts to first impressions. In the old days most fanzines had rather erratic schedules and there wasn't the marketplace concern for immediate and timely comments on this month's output. So writers like Chesney and Kyle (and I would include you, Mike Barrier and John Benson) had the time to consider and reconsider the work and your response to winnow out the false impressions and misreadings that some reviewers get when they first approach a complex work.

TCJ's critics also have the problem that much of their commentary smacks of grad school writing--they write too often for themselves and to themselves. They occasionally seem more interested in an interesting or witty turn of phrase than an insight. I rarely feel that any of them have hit the nail directly on the head in the manner that, say, Benson did when reviewing Art Spiegelman's BREAKDOWNS or the way you and Rick Norwood did (back in GSM #9) when you jointly worked over Gil Kane's HIS NAME IS...SAVAGE.

Unfortunately there doesn't seem to be the alternative journal to print the more considered pieces, unless PANELS is it. But so far Benson seems to be tilling old ground. And although the results are interesting, I'm ready to move on. I'd rather read a feature on Ogden Whitney or Sheldon Mayer than on Eisner or Barks. I can read about Eisner and Barks almost anywhere. I can't read about Whitney or Mayer anywhere, at all.

Which is one of the reasons I was delighted to see Scott's FANFARE piece on Biro. I really didn't know most of what he had to tell me.

I suspect my reservations initially were that no one would take up the slack left by GSM's demise. To some extent I think my misgivings were correct. One would hope that, with as large a market as fandom has become, someone would jump into the fray and do a regularly published journal on old comics. What we get is the opposite. You go to a general format, Steranko goes for a commercial product with cheesecake covers and ends up with a movie company tout sheet. I think we waited too long. The people best suited to spearhead that sort of magazine burned out on comics, and the thankless task of publishing, before a market appeared that was able to pay them for their time and expertise.

I've been concerned somewhat of late as to whether adapting Ray Bradbury's stories to comics could be done successfully. In any adaptation you have to start with the given that the final product is more important than any particular allegiance to the original work. With Bradbury much of the prose would most likely have to be sacrificed. Beautiful prose is a function of fiction, not comics. Whether you use a little or a lot, to some extent it gets in the way of continuity. There will be places where it can be turned to advantage -- as part of the function of pacing and rhythm, here you want the reader to pause and ponder. What you can keep wholecloth is the imagery. I read most of Bradbury when I was young, and what I recall is not the prose but the images. The same holds true with EC's adaptations. I certainly do not remember the captions. I do remember certain images. While "There Will Come Soft Rains" (in WEIRD FANTASY #17) is not the most successful of adaptations, there are bits that Wood captured with amazing clarity. That first panel with the nuclear-etched image of the children playing ball burned into the side of the house stops me, startles me, shows me something I have never seen, never imagined. It would be difficult to impede the power of that particular image.

Craig's "Touch And Go" (CRIME SUSPENSTORIES #17) is one fine example of a relatively successful Bradbury adaptation. I think the image of the fingerprints and the idea behind it is what carries it. Certainly that is what fascinated me as a reader. Style is fine, and Bradbury's prose is instrumental in communicating the idea, but the idea is what sparks the thoughts and emotions that make a story worthwhile. Style/prose is a tool. Sometimes it takes a very special tool to summon up a complex or outre idea, but ultimately we're left with the imagery and the ideas they carry.

Clifford Neal
Mystic, Connecticut

Received FANFARE and as usual enjoyed it. I found something of interest in virtually all the material. However, I thought Short Subjects was almost entirely a waste of space. Trash it!

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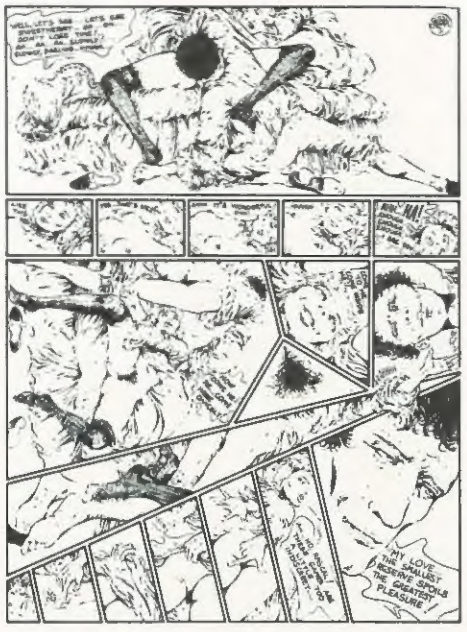

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